



# **Weymouth Public Schools**

## **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

**Updated August 2023**

**Weymouth Public Schools**  
**Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**  
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## **BULLYING LEGISLATION SUMMARY**

On May 3, 2010, Governor Patrick signed a new bullying legislation designed to expand a school district's obligations in terms of monitoring, reporting, and investigating all types of bullying, including cyber-bullying (M.G.L. c.71, § 370). This legislation contains an educational component for all staff and curriculum requirements for all students in grades K-12. This law applies to both public and private schools. Furthermore, Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014, amended the 2010 bullying legislation and was signed into law on April 24, 2014. Per this legislation, all schools are required to create a bullying prevention and intervention plan containing key components. The following components are required by law and are, therefore, contained within the Weymouth Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan:

1. A professional development plan must be established for all staff.
2. Each district must establish a bullying prevention and intervention plan.
3. A K-12 curriculum on bullying must be adopted for all K-12 students.
4. Reporting requirements for all staff who witness or have knowledge of any bullying incident must be implemented.
5. Investigation and disciplinary policies must be instituted for the act of bullying.
6. When criminal charges may be appropriate, notification of law enforcement is needed.
7. Resources and information will be available to parents and guardians including curricula, the dynamics of bullying, online safety, and cyberbullying.
8. Weymouth Public Schools recognizes that certain enumerated categories of students may be more vulnerable to being targets of bullying based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics.
9. Parents and guardians of targets of bullying must be informed of the Department's problem resolution system and assist parents and guardians in understanding the process.
10. Various data is collected and reported to the Department, including the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation; the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying and retaliation, and the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation.
11. A Department-developed student survey is administered at least once every four years to assess "school climate and the prevalence, nature and severity of bullying in schools."

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

*Source: Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, Massachusetts DESE, June 2014*

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. This plan provides all students the same protections regardless of their status under the law. In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

## LEADERSHIP

### A. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan

Per M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the first iteration of the *Weymouth Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* was developed through a collaborative school community process. Various groups were represented, including central office, primary and secondary principals, counselors, teachers, Special Education, police, nurses, bus drivers, Technology Director, Town Athletics Director, Custodian/Maintenance, Cafeteria / Food Services, and Parents / Guardians. Additionally, district administration met with all principals and principals consulted building based groups of students, teachers, support staff, and parents to involve additional representatives in the process. A formal presentation of the Weymouth Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan Proposal was given during a televised School Committee Meeting on November 18, 2010 to invite the public to make comments and suggestions during the development process. Local newspapers and television stations covered issues related to the plan and pending policy. An update was provided at a televised School Committee Meeting on December 2, 2010, again asking for additional feedback regarding the plan. Further revisions were made to the plan and a final version was submitted for School Committee approval on December 16, 2010. The plan has subsequently been updated by the administrative team. Furthermore, a Policy Sub-Committee of the School Committee met at a meeting open to the public to update the existing policy. Based on a recommended policy developed by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees for 2010, the Policy Sub-Committee developed a new policy, which was presented at a televised meeting of the full School Committee on November 18, 2010 for the first of three readings. The final policy File: JICFB was voted and approved on December 16, 2010. As part of this plan, the administrative team updates the plan biennially.

### B. Assessing Needs and Resources

#### *Curricula & Resources:*

There are a variety of programs and curricula currently available throughout grades PK-12/Post-Grad to address bullying prevention and intervention. Although schools are using different programs and resources, each school is addressing both prevention and intervention strategies. Below is a selection of some of the programs and curricula currently in use:

- Activities based on the book *Fill a Bucket* by Carol McCloud and *How Full is Your Bucket?*
- Review of Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Collaboration with Weymouth Police Department for safety messages
- Embedded school wide kindness themed activities
- Monitoring of student reporting of incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment
- Increased staff in identified “hot spots” such as recess and hallway/locker areas
- Programs to foster community responsibility, such as PBIS, ROAR
- RULER
- Second Step
- Peacebuilders
- Counseling Services

*Bullying / Cyberbullying Data and Behavioral Incidents:*

Data on all behavioral incidents are collected and recorded in each school by principals and their designees. This information is available at the school level, may be recorded in X2, the student information management system, and when appropriate, reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Bullying investigations are completed through a workflow in aspen so that data can be reviewed periodically.

*Support Services:*

The Weymouth Public Schools provides students at all levels with supports such as school psychologists, guidance counselors, adjustment counselors, social workers, behavior specialists, and school nurses as needed. Together, these specialists work as a team to provide in-class supports, interventions, progress monitoring, counseling, and staff consultation to ensure appropriate interventions and support to ensure the emotion, behavioral, social, and physical well being of all students.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school or district will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

At least once every four years, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school or district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Bullying Prevention and Intervention training will be included in the Teacher Induction Program. Additionally, all staff will be provided with annual training on the bullying plan and strategies. This training includes both educational and noneducational staff, including but not limited to administrators, teachers, custodians, nurses, maintenance, office staff, coaches, drivers, club/activity advisors, and all paraprofessionals. The bullying plan will also be reviewed with administrators annually and as needed to ensure compliance with the plan.

**Standards** - All staff will receive training that includes the following standards:

1. Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents
2. Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
3. Information regarding power differentials and the often complex interactions that occur between and among an aggressor, a target, and witnesses to a bullying incident

4. Current research on bullying, including
  - a. Students at risk for bullying
  - b. Indicators of bullying behavior
  - c. Categories of students at risk as aggressors
5. Information on the incidence and unique nature of cyber-bullying
6. Information on Internet safety issues related to cyber-bullying

Additional targeted professional development has and will continue to be provided based on the needs and/or concerns identified by staff and administration. Examples follow:

- Specific extended cyber-bullying training
- Distribution of literature related to bullying and cyber-bullying
- Resources/links available on website
- Webinars and teleconferences related to bullying and cyber-bullying
- Out-of-district professional development such as provided by MARC, district attorneys' offices, legal offices, and other venues

\* Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC), located at Bridgewater State College, is recognized throughout the Commonwealth as a leader in bullying and cyber-bullying prevention and awareness.

## **PRIORITY STATEMENT**

The Weymouth Public Schools Fundamental Values:

All students have the right to attend school in a safe environment. Each person should be treated with respect and dignity.

The Weymouth Public Schools expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a manner that demonstrates respect for individuality and diversity. All types of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation are prohibited. Any confirmed instances of bullying will be subject to actions and consequences as outlined in the Weymouth Public Schools Bullying Policy.

The Weymouth Public Schools is committed to working with students, staff, families, the community, and law enforcement in preventing all types of bullying. Thus, the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* has been established for the prevention, intervention, and timely response to reported incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation.

## DEFINITIONS

- Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.
- Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:
  - causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
  - places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
  - creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
  - infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
  - materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- Cyberbullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.
- Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.
- Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.
- School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.
- Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND CURRICULUM PLAN

Per the legislation, every grade within the Weymouth Public Schools will implement a curriculum that addresses bullying prevention using age appropriate instruction. The following curriculum resources and activities will be used to guide a bullying prevention program that teaches students about:

1. Types of bullying including cyberbullying
2. Strategies for dealing with aggressors
3. Ways for students to report bullying
4. Conflict resolution
5. Respectful and empathetic approaches to working and playing with those who are different from you

**Curriculum Resources** – Weymouth Public Schools has selected Peacebuilders as the anti-bullying curriculum for prek through grades 12. The district is planning to implement the Second Step program during the 2023-2024 school year.

### REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The bullying legislation imposes mandatory reporting requirements for *all* members of the school staff to immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation. Staff members must report incidents, which they have either witnessed or become aware of, to the principal, the school designee, or both. The form identified as the “Weymouth Public Schools Alleged Bullying Intake Form” can be found in the appendix section of this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. A copy of the reporting form will also be available in the following locations:

- Student Handbook
- Main office of each school
- Counseling Offices
- Guidance Offices
- Nurse’s Offices
- Website

Anyone can report a bullying or retaliation incident, including students, staff, parents or guardians. Reports may be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member. Reports may also be made anonymously to the principal of each school.

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

- A. Reporting bullying or retaliation. Reports of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing using the district’s *Alleged Bullying Incident Intake Form*. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously.



Each school will make reporting forms available on their website, in the main office, guidance offices, and in the nurses' office. Use of a reporting form is not required as a condition of making a report. The *Alleged Bullying Incident Intake Form* will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

1. **Reporting by Staff:** A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when they witness or become aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.
2. **Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others:** The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee.

#### **B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.**

1. **Safety:** Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, witnessed bullying or retaliation, provides information during an investigation, or who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

2. **Obligations to Notify Others**
  - a. **Notice to parents or guardians.** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

- b. Notice to Another School or District. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.
- c. Notice to Law Enforcement. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. The principal or designee may consult with police liaison's to assist in making this determination.

C. 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.

During the investigation the principal or designee will interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given the obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of alleged bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel regarding the investigation.

D. Determinations. The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary actions are necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws

and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

#### E. Responses to Bullying.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skill Building: Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:
  - offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
  - providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
  - implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
  - meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the antibullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
  - adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and ▪ making a referral for evaluation.
2. Taking Disciplinary Action: If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others: The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact 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 designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target 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. Information on how to file a claim can be found here: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/>

## **INVESTIGATION, DISCIPLINARY POLICIES, AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**Investigation** - Please reference the *Bullying Investigation Procedures* documents in the appendix section of this plan.

The school principal or designee will conduct a prompt investigation of every report of bullying, cyber-bullying, or for retaliation for the reporting of a bullying incident. The principal has the following duties when incidents of bullying have occurred:

1. Take appropriate disciplinary action as outlined in the student handbook, employee handbook and district policy manual.
2. Notify the parents or guardian of the target and notify the parents or guardian of the aggressor
3. Notify the parents/guardians of the target(s) of actions taken to prevent further acts of bullying and/or retaliation
4. Notify the parents/guardians of the aggressor of actions taken to prevent further acts of bullying and/or retaliation
5. Notify law enforcement, when appropriate, if the principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor

**Disciplinary Action:** Disciplinary action will follow the guidelines of the student handbook, employee handbook, and Weymouth Public Schools Policy Manual. Disciplinary actions will consider the age, intent, cognitive abilities, emotional status and actions of the aggressor(s) and may range from discussions with the involved parties to excluding students from school under the disciplinary code.

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality should be maintained throughout the reporting, investigation, and disciplinary process. Confidentiality will be used to protect anyone who reports bullying or retaliation, who provides information during an investigation, or who is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

**Special Education:** As required by M.G. L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines that a child has a disability which affects “social skills development” or the student is “vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of the child’s disability,” the Team will determine what to include in the IEP to address the skills and/or proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to these issues. Cognitively appropriate resources will be used with special education students to assist in teaching bullying prevention and intervention skills.

**Internet & Electronic Communication Device Use:** The Weymouth Public Schools has an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that guides the use of electronic communication devices and other technologies in the district. The AUP will be reviewed annually to ensure that the content of the AUP reflects the rapidly changing technologies and related safety concerns. All students, employees, and parents will be notified of the policy and will be required to sign the AUP.

## **SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**

The Weymouth Public Schools is committed to ensuring that our students and staff feel safe and supported within the school community. The district will continue to work with students, staff, parents and guardians alerting all to the need for more heightened observation of bullying behaviors. Following investigations, if deemed appropriate by the principal, a personalized action plan may be developed to address the needs of the target and/or to work with the aggressor to change behavior and to recognize the harmful effects of their actions.

When deemed appropriate by the principal, the district will provide counseling or other support for both aggressors and targets. The district will also assist students and families with access to both school and community resources.

## **PARENT/COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Parents and guardians will receive annual written notice of student-related sections of the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* and the district's Internet safety policy. This notice will contain information related to anti-bullying curricula including the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The schools or district will make notices available to parents or guardians in hard copy and electronic formats, and in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will also be posted on the Weymouth Public Schools' website.

The district will make resources available to parents and the community to assist in bullying prevention and intervention. Bullying Prevention and Intervention links and resources will be located on the Weymouth Public Schools website.

## **APPENDICES**

# WPS Alleged BULLYING INCIDENT INTAKE FORM

**Definition of Bullying:** Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property; creates a hostile environment at school for the target; infringes on the rights of the target at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. **Check whether you are a:** ☐ Student ☐ Staff member (specify role) \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Parent ☐ Administrator ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Your contact information/telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **If student, state your school:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. **If staff member, state your school or work site:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the incident in detail:**

**Name of Target (of behavior):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s) of Incident(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time When Incident(s) Occurred:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Immediate Safety / Transportation Concerns? If yes, specify where:**

**Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it and indicate each as either a student, staff, or other):

**Signature of Person Filing this Report:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

**Form Given to:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please attach an additional page if necessary.**

**Please comment regarding how this incident disrupted the educational process.**

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**Please describe any physical evidence including photos, text, drawings, or messages (phone, computer, etc.):** \_\_\_\_\_

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Were student(s) referred to law enforcement? \_\_\_\_\_

Was an arrest made? \_\_\_\_\_

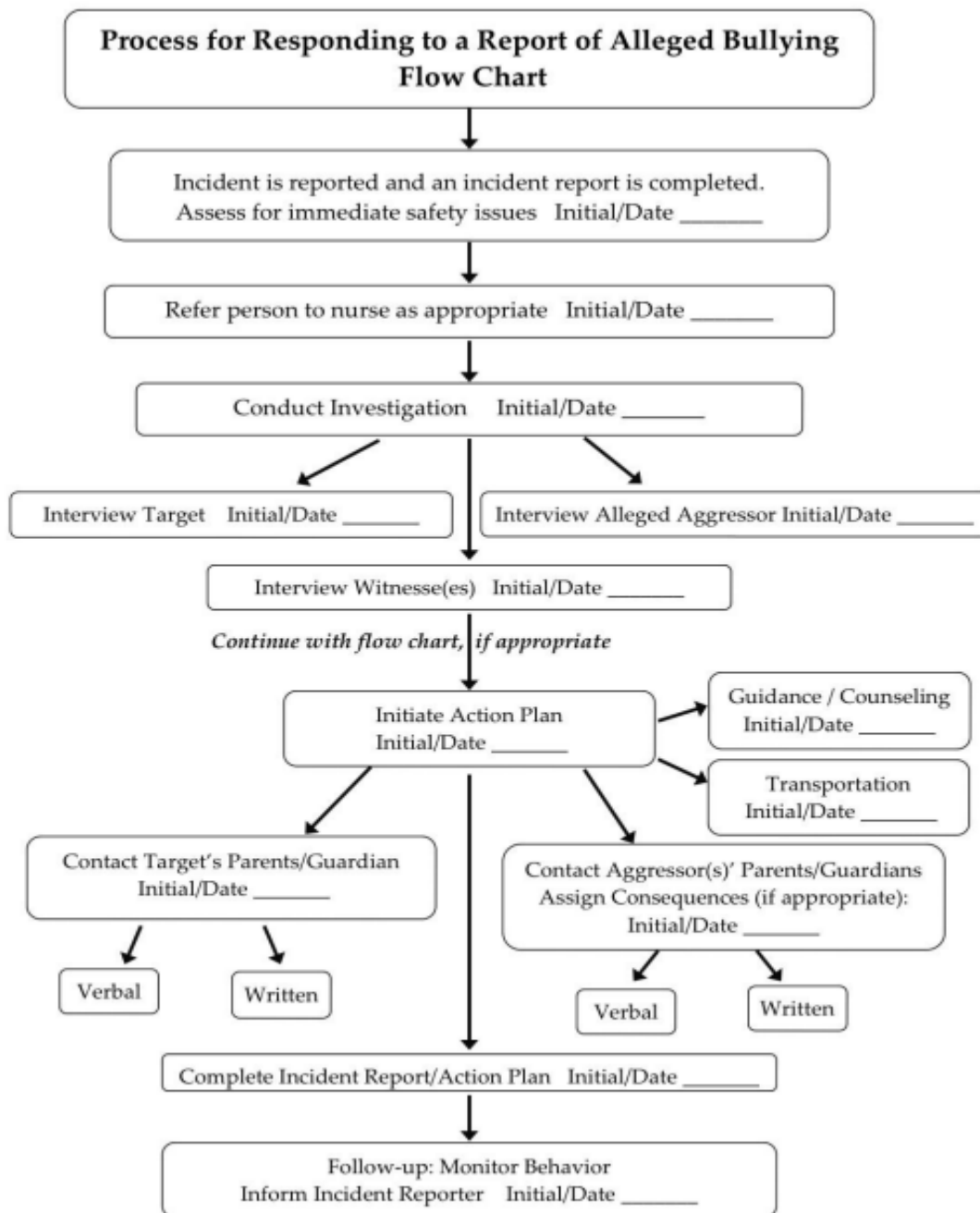
Was bullying based on sex, race, color, national origin, and disability? If yes, refer to principal for possible civil rights investigation. \_\_\_\_\_

Outcome:    ☐ Finding of Bullying                      ☐ Not substantiated as a bullying incident

**Please follow the attached flow chart, *Process for Responding to a Report of Bullying***



## APPENDIX B: Investigation Flow Chart



# APPENDIX C: Summary for Parents/Guardians & Student Handbooks

## BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

### **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools* (M.G.L. c.71, §37O). This law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents.

#### **Definitions:**

**Aggressor** is a student or a member of the school staff who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

**Bullying** is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of the school staff of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyber bullying.

**Cyber bullying** is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

**Hostile environment** is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

***Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.***

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation is directed.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

#### **Prohibition Against Bullying**

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds,
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,

- at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

### **Reporting Bullying**

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously. Please reference the WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for reporting details and contact the building principal and/or Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services and Support (781-335-1460) to report alleged incidents. School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor; (v) notify central office.

# APPENDIX D: WPS Employee Handbook Summary

## BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

On May 3, 2010, Governor Patrick signed a new bullying legislation designed to expand a school district's obligations in terms of monitoring, reporting, and investigating all types of bullying, including cyber-bullying (M.G.L. c.71, § 370). This legislation contains an educational component for all staff and curriculum requirements for all students in grades K-12. This law applies to both public and private schools. Furthermore, Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014, amended the 2010 bullying legislation and was signed into law on April 24, 2014. Per this legislation, all schools are required to create a bullying prevention and intervention plan containing key components.

### Definitions

- Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.
- Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:
  - causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
  - places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
  - creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
  - infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
  - materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- Cyberbullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 for the legal definition of cyberbullying.
- Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.
- Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.
- School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.
- Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### Prohibition Against Bullying

Bullying is prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased, or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the

rights of the target at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

#### Responsibility of Staff to Report Bullying

A member of a school staff is required to report immediately any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the principal or to the school official identified in the Plan as responsible for receiving such reports, or both. Please reference the WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for reporting details and contact the building principal to report alleged incidents.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, an educator, administrator, counselor, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional.

Upon receipt of such a report, the school principal or his/her designee shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the school principal or designee shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

#### Professional Development

Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

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