



## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

The Marlborough Public Schools will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses and at school bus stops or in school-related activities. Schools will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. The Marlborough Public Schools will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, the Marlborough Public Schools has procedures in place for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation against students. These procedures ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur, which is different than non-targeted, disciplinary behavior.

This policy shall not apply to any alleged or perceived “bullying” against staff.

### **Definitions:**

Bullying may take a variety of forms and is unacceptable in a school environment. Consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the terms used in this policy are defined as follows:

1. “Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of 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 target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his 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 shall include cyber- bullying.

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“Cyber-bullying” means, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communication. Cyber-bullying shall also include, but not limited to (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creator or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clause (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

- a. Cyber-bullying may occur through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute.
- b. As used in this Section, “electronic communication” also means any communication through an electronic device including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used, it is to denote either bullying or cyber-bullying. Bullying may occur including, but not limited to, in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying is alleged, the expectation is for the parents and families to provide full cooperation and assistance.

2. “Aggressor” is a student or 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 who engages in bullying or retaliation.
3. “Target” means a student against whom bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.
4. “Retaliation” means any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation about bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.



**Prohibitions:**

Bullying and retaliation are prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Marlborough Public Schools.

Bullying and retaliation are also prohibited 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 the Marlborough Public Schools if the acts in question:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the target.
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Superintendent and/or their designee oversaw the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which included teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially by the Superintendent or their designee and be presented to the school committee for their review and feedback. This biennial review & update will allow for public comment during the public participation section of the meeting agenda when the bullying prevention and intervention plan is presented to the school committee

The Building Administrator is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within their school.



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**Publication and Notice**

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the Marlborough Public Schools website.

REFERENCES: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

LEGAL REFERENCES:

MGL 71:370;  
603 C.M.R. 49.00  
MGL 265:43, 43A  
MGL 268:13B  
MGL 269:14A

CROSS REFERENCES:

Policy 1.100, Nondiscrimination and Harassment  
Policy 6.550, Social Media (Hazing)  
Policy 8.130, Suspension and Expulsion  
Legal Refs: M.G.L. c .71, § 37O; 603 C.M.R. 49.00.

Approved Policy Sub-Committee 3.26.15  
Approved Full Committee 4.14.16  
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