

Barrington Public Schools Bullying Policy

Barrington Public Schools (BPS) recognizes that the bullying of a student creates a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the student's health and negatively affect learning. Bullying undermines the safe learning environment that students need to achieve their full potential. The purpose of the policy is to ensure a consistent and unified statewide approach to the prohibition of bullying at school.

1. DEFINITIONS

BULLYING means the use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student that:

- a. Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- b. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
- c. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the student;
- d. Infringes on the rights of the student to participate in school activities; or
- e. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying can occur as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s). However, bullying can occur as a single incident which causes physical or emotional harm to the victim in its severity.

CYBER-BULLYING means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, texting or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Forms of cyber-bullying may include but are not limited to:

- a. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- b. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages; or
- c. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or

more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) of the definition of bullying.

AT SCHOOL means acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school:

- a. on school premises,
- b. at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises,
- c. on a school-transportation vehicle,
- d. at an official school bus stop, or
- e. using property or equipment provided by the school.

2. REPORTING

The victim of bullying, anyone who witnesses bullying, and anyone who has credible information that bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying.

Any student or staff member who believes they are being bullied should immediately report such circumstances to an appropriate staff member, teacher or administrator.

A report form is provided for parents/guardians or student use at the end of this policy. School officials will utilize the BPS comprehensive bullying investigation report, included in their protocols.

Parents/Guardians of the victim of bullying and parents/guardians of the alleged transgressor shall be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident report. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a child is either a bully or a victim of bullying, the parents/guardians of the child will be notified immediately by the principal or designee.

Responsibility of Staff: School staff, including volunteers, who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Responsibility of Students: Students who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school personnel. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The victim of bullying, however, shall not be subject to discipline for failing to report the bullying. Student reports of bullying or retaliation may be made **anonymously** provided that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an **anonymous report**.

Prohibition against Retaliation: Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying, those who are witnesses to bullying, or those investigating a

bullying report shall not be tolerated. Retaliation or threat of retaliation will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the student handbook.

False Reporting/Accusations: A school employee, school volunteer or student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be disciplined in accordance with the school behavior code.

Reports in Good Faith: A school employee, school volunteer, student, parents/guardians, or caregiver who promptly reports, in good faith, an act of bullying to the appropriate school personnel shall be held harmless for damages arising from reporting bullying.

3. INVESTIGATION/RESPONSE

The Assistant Superintendent and/or school administrator shall promptly investigate all allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary actions, subject to applicable due process requirements, will be imposed. The School Resource Officer or other qualified staff may be utilized to mediate bullying situations.

The investigation will include an assessment by the school psychologist and/or social worker of what effect the bullying, harassment or intimidation has had on the victim. A student who engages in continuous and/or serious acts of bullying will also be referred to the school psychologist and/or social worker.

When investigating bullying, BPS will determine if the criteria meets the definition for harassment. In these instances, the expression, physical act or gesture may include, but are not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as: Race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability or by any other distinguishing characteristic.

Police Notification: Immediate notification of the Barrington Police Department will be made when circumstances warrant the pursuit of criminal charges.

Protection: If a student is the victim of serious or persistent bullying:

- a. The Assistant Superintendent and/or school administrator will intervene immediately to provide the student with a safe educational environment.
- b. The interventions will be developed, if possible, with input from the student, their parents/guardians, and staff.
- c. The parents/guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

4. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall be determined by the building administrator or designee. Disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The severity of the disciplinary action shall be aligned to the severity of the bullying behavior.

The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against the aggressor for bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. Admonitions and warnings,
- b. Parents/Guardians notification and meetings,
- c. Detention,
- d. In-school suspension,
- e. Loss of school-provided transportation or loss of student parking pass,
- f. Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities,
- g. Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities,
- h. Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises or middle school promotional activities,
- i. Police notification, or
- j. School suspension: No student shall be suspended from school unless it is deemed a necessary consequence of the violation of this policy.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wp7n7rSI9MrLmlgX0UztJySaaUmmZvko/view>

5. SOCIAL SERVICES/COUNSELING

Referral to appropriate counseling and/or social services currently being offered by schools or communities shall be provided for bullying victims, aggressors and appropriate family members of students.

Approved 10/04/12

Amended First Read: 6/14/2018

Second Read/Amendment Approved: 7/12/2018

REPORT FORM FOR BARRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
(Investigation of Bullying and/or Cyber-Bullying/Harassment)

- ❖ In all instances of student bullying, the school must also consider if additional harassment has occurred as part of the investigation process.
- ❖ Once a school knows or reasonably should know of possible student-on-student harassment, it must take immediate and appropriate action to investigate or otherwise determine what occurred.
- ❖ If harassment has occurred, a school must take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment, eliminate any hostile environment, and prevent its recurrence. These duties are a school's responsibility even if the misconduct also is covered by an anti-bullying policy and regardless of whether the student makes a complaint, asks the school to take action, or identifies the harassment as a form of discrimination.

Name: _____ Student ID: _____ Grade: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ School: _____

List all students involved: _____

List the name of the transgressor and victim. If name is not known, provide any other identifiable information: _____

Relationship between you and the transgressor and victim: _____

Describe the incident: _____

When and where did it happen? _____

Were there any witnesses? yes no If yes, who? _____

Other information, including previous incidents or threats: _____

It is my understanding that all statements made in the complaint are true. Any intentional false statement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline or other action.

School official receiving complaint: _____ Date: _____

Other: _____ Date: _____

School official conducting follow-up: _____ Date: _____

This document shall remain confidential

Bullying/Harassment Investigation
To be completed by school official indicated on page 1

1. Describe follow-up activities and findings that occurred with the student(s) who may have been the victim(s) of bullying/harassment.

(Indicate here if your report continues onto another page.)

2. Describe follow-up activities and findings that occurred with the accused student(s).

(Indicate here if your report continues onto another page.)

3. Describe the parent communication regarding the student(s) who may have been victims.

(Indicate here if your report continues onto another page.)

4. Describe the parent communication regarding the student(s) who have been accused of bullying/harassment.

(Indicate here if your report continues onto another page.)

5. Based upon your investigation, was a safety plan developed? (If yes, please attach).

6. Based upon your investigation, did you determine this was a case of harassment based on:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities

Act of 1990, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

7. Based upon your investigation, did you determine this was a case of bullying? Yes ___ No ___
Please describe the resolution to this investigation and any continuing interventions if applicable.

Signature _____ Date _____

Submitted to Principal Assistant Superintendent Superintendent