

Newton Public Schools
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

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The district's Bullying Intervention and Prevention Policy, Plan, reporting forms and other resources can be found at NPS website <http://respect.newton.k12.ma.us>.

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BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

Introduction

Newton Public Schools is committed to providing excellence and equity, ensuring high levels of academic and socio-emotional learning. In order to do this, we have a proactive approach to the prevention of bullying and all forms of harassment and strong interventions when violations of our norms and rules occur. Bullying or retaliation may occur in many forms, including through physical means, degrading words or actions, or social isolation. Its impact may be physically or emotionally hurtful. It instills fear of further injury, creates a hostile environment at school and, as a result, substantially disrupts a target's educational experience. Bullying makes the target feel small, while its impact looms large. Anyone can be a target, but certain groups are particularly vulnerable to bullying. This includes students who are gay and lesbian, have special needs, are from certain immigrant or religious groups, and/or who in any way appear different. Students or staff members may be targets and students or staff members may also be aggressors.

In order to create a school culture that is free of harassment and bullying, students, staff, and parents all have a responsibility to recognize and report bullying when they see it. We must also build a school environment that, by its very nature, prevents bullying before it occurs. This requires an evidence-based curriculum, clear expectations for students, sound policies and procedures, professional development for all staff, and community education and outreach.

During the winter of 2010, following a discussion that emerged out of the district's Wellness Committee, the district formed an Anti-Bullying Task Force in advance of the passage of an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools* in May 2010. This anti-bullying statute was codified in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37O. The task force consisted of 29 members including representatives from the schools, the police, the health department, parents, and students. This work was done in conjunction with the work of The Newton Partnership. The law required each school system to develop a comprehensive plan that includes requirements and obligations having to do with policies, procedures, staff training, and curriculum. The plan was presented to the School Committee on November 22, 2010, and further discussed at a special open comment period during the December 13, 2010 School Committee meeting. In 2014 the Massachusetts legislature passed Chapter 86 of Acts of 2015, which amended M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and was signed into law on April 24, 2014. G.L. c. 71, §37O, as amended requires school districts to recognize in their bullying prevention and intervention plans categories of students that may be more vulnerable to bullying, imposes upon the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education an obligation to create a problem resolution system to assist parents and guardians, imposes new state data reporting requirements upon school districts with respect to reported allegations of bullying or retaliation and the resolution of said reports, and further requires school districts to

administer a DESE-developed student climate survey every four (4) years. In order to implement the updates to the anti-bullying statute, an updated Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan was presented to the Newton School Committee on October 13, 2015 and adopted by the School Committee on October 26, 2015.

Newton's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan consists of four components: Curriculum and School Climate, Staff Development, Parent and Community Engagement and Education, and Policy and Procedures, outline on our website, <http://respect.newton.k12.ma.us>.

Assessing Needs and Resources

Every two years, NPS will review and assess the adequacy of the current policies and procedures, current programs, and assess various resources and update the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan, procedures, training, and curricula accordingly.

At least every four years, beginning with the 2015-2016 school-year, NPS will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the district will annually report bullying incident data to DESE.

Curriculum

By law, the Newton Public Schools will provide age appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each and every grade. Instruction on bullying prevention is not new in the Newton Public Schools, as a number of programs addressing bullying, harassment and retaliation have been implemented over the years. Below are brief descriptions of the curricula implemented by Newton Public Schools:

Responsive Classroom

This is an evidence-based approach to elementary teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. In Responsive Classrooms, students learn a set of pro-social behaviors and skills such as showing empathy. Studies show that students who exhibit bullying behaviors lack empathy. The goal is optimal student learning via specific guiding principles and classroom practices. The Responsive Classroom approach emphasizes the importance of the social curriculum and positive interaction skills. The program focuses on how children learn, respects the individuality of each child, utilizes partnerships with families, teaches collaborative problem solving, develops logical consequences, and models a collaborative, whole-school approach.

Bully-proof

This is a supplement to the Responsive Classroom approach that builds a positive and safe classroom and school community from day 1, addresses gateway behaviors, creates rules and explicitly teaches expectations, addresses “tattling”, identifies “hot spots” and teaches students specifically about bullying.

Second Step Middle School Program: Student Success through Prevention (Developed by Committee for Children)

This evidence-based curriculum targets substance abuse, bullying, and violence prevention. It promotes the development of empathy, positive communication, and emotion management; and coping, problem solving, decision making, and goal-setting skills. These positive factors enhance stress management. There are 13-15 lessons for each middle school grade: six, seven, and eight. These lessons use interactive teaching methods and media to engage students to make positive choices and support social emotional learning. It includes targeted lessons on cyberbullying. The comprehensive curriculum advocates a community-wide approach that links school personnel and parents to support common goals. These goals are designed to increase protective factors, such as school “connectedness” (i.e., students sense that they have at least one adult in the school that they feel connected to) and social skills development (such as assertive communication skills and positive peer relationships). The Second Step program is designed to create a peer environment where thoughtful decision making is encouraged and substance abuse is rejected.

Bully-proofing Your High School

The high schools are using the evidence-based approach, Bully-Proofing Your School. The *Bully-Proofing* approach, along with various pro-kindness initiatives, give us the ability to mobilize the “caring majority”—the 85 percent of students who are neither bullies nor victims—by developing and reinforcing their strong identities. Through their actions and influence, these students dictate the operating environment, giving strength and support to victims and defusing the power of bullies.

Library: Lessons on Responsible Internet Use

Students use the Internet for information and for communication. The Library Department is developing a sequential series of lessons that instruct students in becoming ethical users of electronic information and resources, and responsible participants in social networks. In grades 3-5, there are a series of lessons in place that address Internet Safety. The classroom teacher and the instructional technology specialist jointly teach the lesson in grade 3. The lessons in grades 4 and 5 are co-taught by the library teacher and the classroom teacher. These lessons require students to apply what they learn in grade 3 as they are challenged to respond to a set of actual scenarios. The scenarios are thematic: grade 4 addresses the appropriate use of email; grade 5 addresses chat rooms and cyberbullying. Other lessons focus on social networking, student understanding of the Acceptable Use Policy, netiquette, and

citing sources. These lessons are reinforced at the middle school level in lessons taught by the library teacher in grade 6 and by the health/wellness teacher, all in conjunction with the Second Step curriculum. The high school library teachers also reinforce messages having to do with responsible use of the Internet as part of their orientations to the library and their ongoing work with students conducting research.

Professional Development

The Newton Public Schools will annually provide professional development to all staff members that will review the district's policies and procedures, refer staff to information on the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention website, and provide training that includes the following components:

- a. Strategies for intervention to stop bullying.
- b. Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place among an aggressor, a target and witnesses to bullying.
- c. Information on supporting students who are vulnerable to bullying.
- d. Information on how to provide all students with skills, knowledge and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying and harassment
- d. Information on cyberbullying.
- e. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying
- f. The reporting, intervention, investigation, notification and reporting procedures and duties under the Plan;

In addition, the district trains teachers who are going to be teaching the anti-bullying curriculum within their schools.

Parent and Community Engagement

Newton has developed and updated a comprehensive Bullying Prevention and Intervention website. It will offer easy access to the policy, plan, and procedures, and it will provide a vehicle for reporting instances of bullying or retaliation providing useful resources and links to related sites. The web address for the Newton Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention webpage is as follows: <http://respect.newton.k12.ma.us>.

Newton's Bullying Prevention and Intervention webpage, to which parents/guardians will be referred, will include information about the following:

- a. How to reinforce the school/school district's bullying prevention curricula at home.
- b. The dynamics of bullying.
- c. Online safety and cyberbullying.

In addition, Newton Public Schools, will continue to conduct parent workshops and produce communications for parents/guardians to reinforce the school district's curricula and policy and to deepen understanding of the dynamics of bullying and retaliation.

Project INTERFACE is another important community resource. Project INTERFACE provides a list of online resources/providers in the area, and it maintains a mental health and wellness referral help line. For example, as part of the investigation and response to an instance of bullying, the district will determine with families whether a family member of the involved students would be well served by counseling or referral services. Project INTERFACE is a key resource in this regard.

Policy and Procedures

The Policy and Procedures are as follows:

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Procedures include sections on definitions, the scope of school authority, reporting obligations, notification requirements, investigations, intervention outcomes and reporting requirements. In addition, the district's Students' Rights and Responsibilities Handbook has been modified to include disciplinary codes relating to bullying, retaliation, or aiding, abetting or encouraging bullying. There are also reporting and investigation forms, as well as a flow chart, which all supplement the policy. These procedures seek to protect the target, inform parents of all parties, and restore a sense of safety, while both disciplining and educating the target, aggressor, and bystanders.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy

Revised and Adopted by School Committee October 26, 2015

All members of the school community deserve the opportunity to work and learn in an environment of mutual respect. In order to create and maintain such an environment, students and staff must treat each other with courtesy and consideration.

The Newton Public Schools is committed to adhering to a policy of non-discrimination based on race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity/national origin, age, or handicap/disability, in accordance with state and/or federal laws. These policies, as described in the "Right to an Equal Education" section of the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, specifically prohibit harassment based upon each of these protected classifications.

In addition, Newton Public Schools recognizes that bullying, intimidation or retaliation on any basis, whether or not it is related to membership in a protected class, has a negative effect on school climate. Students who are intimidated and fearful cannot give their education the attention they need for success. Bullying, intimidation or retaliation for any reason are prohibited in the Newton Public Schools. Prevention begins with a strong educational program and the establishment of a positive, caring school environment.

Creating a school culture free of harassment and bullying demands that all individuals recognize such behaviors and take action to stop them. Every student and staff member in the Newton Public Schools has the potential and the responsibility to have a positive effect on the school culture and should act in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Treat others with courtesy, consideration and respect.
- Tell individuals behaving in a disrespectful manner towards you that you want them to stop.
- Tell individuals behaving in a disrespectful manner towards someone else that you want them to stop.
- Report behavior to a trusted adult.

We understand that members of certain student groups, or students based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics, may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, or harassment. Newton Public Schools seeks 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 or harassment.

Whenever the evaluation of the Individualized Education Program team indicates that the child has a disability that affects social skills development or that the child is vulnerable to bullying or harassment because of the child's disability, the Individualized Education Program shall address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying or harassment.

The intent of this policy is to meet the obligations of M.G.L. c.71 sec. 37O, as amended.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying (including cyberbullying) is the repeated use by one or more students or staff member, of a written, verbal, or electronic communication or expression, or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target. Bullying results in the outcomes that:

- cause physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to his or her property;
- place the target in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; or

- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means or communication, including, but not 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, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include: (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 creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in 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 more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

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.

Aggressor is a student or a staff member, 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.

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

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

Target is a student or adult against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Bullying can include any form of repeated behavior, either in person or via electronic means, that involves an imbalance of power or strength and a pattern of behavior which interferes with another person's sense of safety, dignity, comfort or productivity in the school environment. Possible behaviors may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical intimidation or assault
- Name calling (verbal/written), teasing, mimicking, slurs, or other derogatory remarks

- Displaying materially and substantially disruptive graffiti, symbols, posters, pictures, cartoons/caricatures, notes, book covers, or designs on clothing
- Phone calls, and/or electronic communications
- Touching of a person or person's clothing
- Words, pranks or actions which provoke feelings or embarrassment, hurt, or intimidation
- Stalking
- Threats, threatening gestures or actions
- False accusations or rumors
- Social isolation

The above behaviors are not necessarily bullying in isolation, but they constitute bullying when they occur in a repeated context and they:

- have the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school or work environment;
- have the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance; or
- otherwise adversely affect an individual's educational opportunities.

SCOPE OF SCHOOL AUTHORITY

The Newton Public School System prohibits bullying (including cyberbullying):

- at school and at all school facilities;
- at school-sponsored or school-related functions, whether on or off school grounds;
- on school buses and school bus stops;
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, licensed or used by a school; and
- at non-school-related locations and through non-school technology or electronic devices, if the bullying affects the school environment.

(Note: The above policy statement will be incorporated into the Students' Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.)

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Procedures

A. Reporting Obligations

Reporting by Staff: All faculty, staff, independent contractors or school volunteers who

become aware or have a reasonable belief that bullying or retaliation has occurred shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation orally or in writing, to the principal/designee(s). 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.

Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others: In keeping with the Newton Public School System's core value of providing a safe, healthy, respectful environment, any student, parent/guardian, and others who become aware of or has a reasonable belief that bullying or retaliation has occurred or may have occurred to other members of the school community is strongly encouraged to promptly report the incident(s) to the principal/designee. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Reporting to Local Law Enforcement: In the event that bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal/designee will notify the local law enforcement agency in writing, if s/he suspects that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Anonymous Reporting: Anonymous reports may be made utilizing the Newton Public School System's bullying reporting form, which can be accessed on the webpage <http://respect.newton.k12.ma.us>. Anonymous reports may be delivered to a designated area in each school. The school will investigate such reports to the extent that sufficient information is provided to do so. Formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Annual Reporting to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: In accordance with the M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(k), NPS will annually provide the following data to DESE: 1) the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation; 2) the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying and retaliation; 3) the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation; and 4) other information required by DESE.

B. Investigation

The school principal/designee shall investigate promptly a report of bullying or retaliation, giving consideration to all circumstances at hand, including the nature of allegations, ages of the students involved, and whether any behaviors are related to a student's disability. The following are general guidelines for responding to a report of bullying or retaliation. The guidelines will be adapted as necessary to respond appropriately to the complaint. Upon receiving a complaint, the parents/guardians of all parties (both the target and the aggressor) involved will be notified of an incident in a timely fashion, preferably on the same day of the report, by the principal/designee. Even before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will consider whether there is a need to take immediate steps to support the

alleged target and or/protect the alleged target from further potential incidents of concern. In taking any such action, however, the rights and safety of the alleged target, alleged aggressor, and bystanders must be considered.

If the principal/designee determines that a bullying incident had the effect of placing the target in reasonable fear or harm, or adversely affected their educational environment, then a formal investigation would be initiated. The principal will use a “reasonable person” standard in making this determination. (When applied to children, the “reasonable person” standard is generally, “that a reasonable person of like age, intelligence and experience under like circumstances.”)

Allegation involving Staff Member: If the complaint involves an allegation against a staff member, the principal/designee will inform the staff member of the allegation and investigation, and consult with the Director of Human Resources prior to interviewing the staff member.

Written statement of complaint: The investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint, gathering information from the target, including such matters as:

- what specifically happened,
- who committed the alleged acts,
- who was present or may have information about the events,
- when the events occurred (date, time of day), and
- where the events occurred.

Gathering information: Once the allegations of the target are established, the investigator will gather information, which often involves interviews of all parties. The principal/designee should remind the alleged aggressor and witness that retaliation against whom they believe might have reported the incident or cooperated with the investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action and/or possible referral to local law enforcement.

Confidentiality: During an investigation, the confidentiality of the target and the other witnesses will be maintained to the extent practicable given the school’s obligation to investigate and address the matter.

C. Determination and Intervention Outcomes

School personnel must weigh all of the information objectively to determine whether the alleged event occurred and, if it did, whether the events constitute bullying or retaliation. The determination must be based upon all of the facts and circumstances and the perspective of a reasonable person.

Students who engage in bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action; however, action taken must balance the need for accountability with the need to teach

appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary actions includes, but is not limited to, verbal or written warning, reprimands, detentions, short- or long-term suspensions, or expulsion from school, as determined by the school administration and/or school committee.

If bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the school will work to assure the safety of all parties. The school will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The district will also take appropriate steps to protect from retaliation persons who take action consistent with this policy, or who report, file a complaint of, or cooperate in an investigation of a violation of this policy.

Threats or acts of retaliation, whether person-to-person, by electronic means, or through third parties are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant disciplinary and other corrective action.

As with the investigation, the response will be individually tailored to all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the age of the students involved. In addition to taking disciplinary action, the following are examples of steps that may be taken to prevent the recurrence of bullying or retaliation:

- Monitor and assure the continued safety of all parties. Develop and implement a safety plan for the target and witnesses as needed.
- Provide necessary supports for the target.
- Require relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students.
- Refer to psycho/social educational groups or workshops.
- Develop an action plan directed toward helping the aggressor recognize and correct behaviors.
- Conduct parent conferences.
- Refer to intervention groups and/or individual counseling for all parties as appropriate.
- Monitor behaviors and, as needed, develop a behavioral contract.
- Work with bystanders to empower them in becoming part of the solution.
- Enhance adult supervision on school premises.
- Limit or deny student access to a part or area of a school and/or to the students involved.
- Require classroom or school transfers.
- Exclude from participation in school-sponsored or school-related functions, afterschool programs, and/or extracurricular activities.
- Determine with the families whether a family member of the involved students (target, aggressor, bystanders) would be well served by counseling or referral to services. If appropriate, referrals may be made to in-house counseling or psychological services, local agencies, and/or Project INTERFACE.

A disability that affects social skills development may in turn affect a student's participation in (as an aggressor) or vulnerability to (as a target) bullying. In addition to

the possibility of the above actions, the Team may consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to refrain from or respond to bullying behavior. This may include creation of or adjustment to behavior plans and/or instruction in social pragmatics.

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. Parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor, to the extent consistent with state and federal law, will be notified of actions taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

Regardless of the outcome of the bullying or retaliation determination, the principal or designee will inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system. Any parent or guardian wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the DESE Program Resolution System. That information can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 784-338-3700.

References in the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook

Rules of Behavior and Discipline of Students: Discipline Guidelines and Codes (Section B), pages 17-18.

M15. Bullying or retaliation related to a bullying incident, reporting, or investigation (grades 6-12) (possible police notification).

D 21: Bullying or retaliation related to a bullying incident, reporting, or investigation (grades K -5) (possible police notification).

D 22: Aiding, abetting or encouraging bullying or making a false allegation of bullying or retaliation.

Right to an Equal Education: Non-Discrimination Policy (Sections A), Procedure for Filing Complaints Related to Discrimination or Harassment (Section B), and Procedures for Filing Complaints Related to Sexual Harassment (Section C).

I. RIGHT TO AN EQUAL EDUCATION

A. Non-Discrimination Policy

State and federal laws prohibit discrimination in education. In the Newton Public Schools, we do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation with regard to admission, access to programs or activities, or employment opportunities. In the Newton Public Schools:

1. No student shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination, or subjected to harassment in any academic, extracurricular, research, vocational or other school-sponsored activity because of such student's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation (i.e., protected status).
2. No student shall be excluded from any school program or school-sponsored activity because of pregnancy or because of marital or parental status, except where required by health considerations or where the educational process would be disrupted.
3. No student shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination, or subjected to harassment in any academic, extracurricular, research, vocational or other school-sponsored activity because of such student's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation (i.e., protected status).
4. No student shall be excluded from any school program or school-sponsored activity because of pregnancy or because of marital or parental status, except where required by health considerations or where the educational process would be disrupted.
5. After giving birth, a student is permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular programs as before her leave. The district does not require a pregnant student to obtain certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school, other than the same health and immunization records that are required of all students. The only limitations or accommodations implemented for a pregnant student will be those deemed necessary by the student's physician, as documented in writing by that physician.

B. Definitions

Discrimination: Treating people differently, or interfering with or preventing a student from enjoying the advantages, privileges or courses of study because of a student's actual or perceived race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation (i.e., protected status).

Harassment: Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic or physical conduct on school property or at a school-related event, function or activity relating to a student's actual or perceived race, color sex, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation (i.e., protected status) that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's programs or activities, by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. For purposes of this policy, harassment shall also mean conduct, if it persists, that will likely create a hostile, humiliating, intimidating or offensive educational environment.

Retaliation: Any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment, against a student who reports a complaint of discrimination or harassment, provides information during an investigation, or witnesses or has reliable information about discrimination or harassment.

Sexual Harassment: Unwanted sexual attention from peers, staff, or anyone the person may interact with on school property or at a school-related event, function or activity. The range of behaviors include: verbal comments, leering, pinching, patting and other forms of unwanted touching, subtle pressure for sexual activity, as well as rape or attempted rape.

C. Procedure for Filing Complaints Related to Discrimination or Harassment

If a student feels he or she has been discriminated against, harassed or has been subject to retaliation, the student may lodge a complaint with appropriate school staff, the principal of his or her school, or to the Superintendent. All reports of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation will be investigated promptly and in an impartial and as confidential a manner as possible, to ensure prompt and appropriate action. Any individual who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in discriminatory conduct, or harassing conduct, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or termination of employment.

It is the policy of the Newton Public Schools to deal with discrimination and harassment complaints at the individual school level whenever possible. However, if a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved, a student may file a written complaint with the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. The Superintendent or

his/her designee shall respond in writing within 30 days. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, he/she may take the complaint to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Program Quality Assurance, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 or other appropriate federal or state agency. The Section 504, Title VI and Title IX Coordinator for Newton is Judy Levin-Charns, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, 100 Walnut Street, Newtonville, MA, (617) 559-6025.

Sexual harassment may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law (G.L. c.119, §51a). Newton Public Schools will comply with Massachusetts law in reporting suspected cases of child abuse, including those involving sexual harassment, to the Department of Social Services and/or the Newton Police Department.

Relationship to Other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Newton Public Schools, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a Newton public school or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Nothing in the Plan prevents the Newton Public Schools 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.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the Newton Public Schools to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, M.G.L. c. 71, §§41 and 42, M.G.L. c 76 § 5, or other applicable laws, Newton Public Schools' policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

**Newton Public Schools
Bullying Incident Reporting Form**

Bullying is serious and will not be tolerated in the Newton Public Schools. **If you wish to report an incident of alleged bullying**, either contact the principal (assistant principal or housemaster) or complete this form and return it to the school so that staff can investigate the matter. In addition, we encourage you to work directly with school staff as they take steps to resolve problems and assure the safety of all parties. You can find more information about the Newton Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on our website www3.newton.k12.ma.us and <http://respect.newton.k12.ma.us>. This form can be completed anonymously.

Today's date: _____

Name(s) of target(s) of bullying:	Age	Grade/Position	School
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Name(s) of aggressor(s):	Age	Grade/Position	School
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Name(s) of witness(es):

When did the incident(s) happen? (Include date and time.)

Where did the incident(s) occur?

Please check the box or boxes next to the statement(s) that best describes what happened (choose all that apply):			
<input type="checkbox"/> Retaliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Teasing	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation
<input type="checkbox"/> Hurtful, demeaning remarks or actions	<input type="checkbox"/> Aggression encouraged by others	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Humiliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Extortion
<input type="checkbox"/> Maliciously excluding from group	<input type="checkbox"/> Rumors or Spreading Falsehoods	<input type="checkbox"/> Cyberbullying	<input type="checkbox"/> Stalking
<input type="checkbox"/> Defacing clothing or other property	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Theft

Give a brief description of the incident(s) and/or your concerns. (Use reverse side if necessary)

Did a physical injury result? Please check one of the following:

No Yes, but it did not require medical attention Yes, and it required medical attention

Do you know of other incidents of bullying directed at this student? Yes No

Name of the person reporting incident(s)? (You may report anonymously) _____

Relationship to Student: _____ Telephone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Administrator Receiving Report:

Date:

Corrective Action:

Parent notification regarding outcomes as it pertains to their child, including action(s) taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation: (date and time)

Administrator Investigating Incident(s):

Name:

Title: