Scituate Public Schools
Scituate, Massachusetts

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Adopted by the Scituate School Committee Dec. 20, 2010
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I. LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in developing and implementing Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans ("the Plan") in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference.

Leadership is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. It is also the responsibility of leaders to involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing and implementing the Plan.

A. Public involvement in developing the Plan. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, the Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed during the fall of 2010 with extensive input from key constituents. The Plan incorporated the work of the Districtwide Anti-Bullying Committee, which had been convened in fall 2009 and included key constituents from the schools and larger community. The Districtwide Anti-Bullying Committee also included under its umbrella existing efforts such as the Anti-Defamation League programs at the high school. The Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was made available for public input at meetings throughout the fall of 2010, including School Committee meetings as well as School Council meetings.

B. Assessing needs and resources. The Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is the district's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. In order to guarantee an ongoing awareness of needs, and be able to respond to those needs, the district allows for periodic needs assessments: 1) surveying students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues; and 2) collecting and analyzing building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and "hot spots" in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses). This information helps to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and informs decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services. At least once every four years beginning with the 2015/16 school year, 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.

C. Planning and oversight. Oversight responsibilities for the Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan are divided as follows: 1) Principals receive reports on bullying; 2) Principals collect and analyze building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes; 3) The District Anti-Bullying Committee creates a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors; 4) The Assistant Superintendent and District Anti-Bullying Committee provide ongoing professional development that is required by the law; 5) The District Anti-Bullying Committee responds to the needs of targets and aggressors; 6) District Administrators and teachers work together to choose and implement the curricula that the school or district will use; 7) The District Anti-Bullying Committee
develops new policies and protocols (or revises existing ones) under the Plan, including an Internet Safety Policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them; 8) Principals amend student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; 9) Principals create parent information materials; and 10) The District Anti-Bullying Committee reviews and updates the Plan each year, or more frequently.

D. Priority Statements.

- The Scituate Public Schools expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

- The school or district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

- We understand that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment 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. The school or district will take specific steps 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.

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

- The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.
II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan reflects the requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 to provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals. This section of the Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan includes the six topics that must be included in professional development according to M.G.L. c. 71, § 370.

A. Annual staff training on the Plan. Annual training will take place at the beginning of each school year for all school staff that will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

B. Ongoing professional development. The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, the content of school-wide and districtwide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

i. developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
ii. developmentally (or age-) 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.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies; applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

C. Written notice to staff. The school or district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. The Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan describes the strategies for providing supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the school's or district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, available services should reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors. The Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan includes a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets and family members of those students.

A. Identifying resources. Schools will provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors and their family utilizing resources of the School Psychologist, School Social Worker and Guidance Counselor (where available). We will identify classroom teachers or specialist staff including art, music, physical education, reading, etc., who may have a special connection with the target or aggressor; this is one intervention strategy that can assist with skill building.

B. Staffing and curriculum. The Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan includes the school's or district's process for identifying its capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. This will include a review of current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on early interventions and intensive services. Once this mapping of resources is complete, the school or district can develop recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps. This may include adopting new curricula, reorganizing staff, establishing safety planning teams, and identifying other agencies that can provide services. The District Anti-Bullying Committee will develop a timeline and oversee this process.

C. Counseling and other services. Culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling and other resources are available within the Scituate Public Schools. If resources need to be developed, linkages may be made to community organizations. Counseling staff members at all schools, including school counselors, school psychologists and others, will assist schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, providing social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. Tools that will be used in this process include behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.

D. Students with disabilities. As required by M.G.L. c. 718, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the
IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

E. Referral to outside services. The Scituate Public Schools has an established protocol for referring students and families to outside services. Clear protocols will help students and families access appropriate and timely services. Referrals must comply with relevant laws and policies.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The Scituate Public Schools provides age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's or district's curricula. Effective instruction on bullying prevention will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development. Bullying prevention curriculum includes the following characteristics:

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches. Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts. (See SPS Vertical Curriculum Alignment Chart in Appendix A). The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with 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 disabilities;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
• using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
• using the Internet safely; and
• supporting students’ interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, the Scituate Public Schools has put in place policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community - students, parents, and staff - know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur.

A. Reporting bullying or retaliation. Reports of bullying 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. 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. An incident reporting form can be found on the school website and in the main office. Reports can be filed by calling the main office or by submitting a reporting form. The form can be submitted anonymously.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school’s main office, the counseling office, the school nurse’s office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school’s website. The Incident Reporting 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 Scituate Public Schools provides 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 he/she witnesses or becomes 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, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student 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. In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with Scituate School and District policies and procedures consult with individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.
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, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) 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 his/her 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 bullying and retaliation will be consistent with Scituate policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about 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 action is 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.

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.

E. **Responses to Bullying.** The following strategies will be utilized by the Scituate Public Schools to build skills and prevent bullying and retaliation.

1. **Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building**

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior will be utilized. M.G.L. c. 71, § 370(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:
• offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the Scituate'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 anti-bullying 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 Scituate'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. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

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.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

In order to increase our capacity to prevent and respond to bullying, the Scituate Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students’ families. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. Parents or guardians of students in the Scituate Public Schools will be informed about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the Scituate plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyberbullying.

A. Parent education and resources. Scituate Public Schools will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in
collaboration with the PTO, School Councils, Special Education and Parent Advisory Council, along with SHORE, SEA and CORSE.

B. Notification requirements. Each year the Scituate Public Schools will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. Scituate Public Schools will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and our Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. Scituate Public Schools will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

(i) 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; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

(ii) 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 also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, nothing in this Plan requires Scituate Public Schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM:

Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v): The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department’s problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. This information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats.

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent’s office.

IX. DEFINITIONS

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M. G. L. c. 71, § 370, as noted below.

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.
Bullying is the repeated 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 victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying may include conduct such as physical intimidation or assault, including intimidating an individual into taking an action against his/her will; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; stalking; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

Cyberbullying is 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 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. Cyber-bullying 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 above 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 more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated above in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying may include conduct such as sending derogatory, harassing or threatening email messages, instant messages, or text messages; creating websites that ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate others; and posting on websites or disseminating embarrassing or inappropriate pictures or images of others.

Hostile Environment: A 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.

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 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.

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Scituate Public Schools, 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 this plan prevents Scituate 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.
### SCITUATE PUBLIC SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING CURRICULUM

#### Grades K-5 OPEN CIRCLE (2000-Present)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM</th>
<th>VOCABULARY</th>
<th>SKILLS</th>
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| The Open Circle Program is an evidenced-based social and emotional learning program designed to proactively address many of the social, emotional and environmental issues that can lead to bullying. Its curriculum provides a common language in which to discuss difficult social issues, such as bullying. The classroom teacher facilitates weekly lessons that help develop student resilience, empathy and social skills. In addition, lessons directly address teasing and bullying. Teachers also work with students to identify dangerous and destructive behaviors and help them determine when adult intervention is needed, as well as encouraging students to speak up when they are bystanders to a bullying situation. All the lessons in grades 1&2 contribute to the foundation of bullying prevention. In grades 3-5 the curriculum includes targeted lessons on the definition of bullying and the role of bystanders in bullying episodes. | Body Language  
Brainstorming  
Bullying  
Bystander  
Calm Breathing  
Compliment  
Compromise  
Consensus  
Cooperate  
Double D’s  
Empathy  
Goal  
Interview  
Leadership  
A Positive Leader  
Non Negotiable Rules  
Nonverbal signals  
Obstacle  
Positive Self Talk  
Problem Solving Steps  
School Listening Look  
Speaking Up | The curriculum follows a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence of skills. |
| 1. Self-awareness and Self-management  
2. Being calm, getting calm when you feel upset  
3. Speaking up  
4. Understanding feelings  
5. Body language  
6. Expressing anger appropriately  
7. Recognizing differences/discrimination  
8. Friendship Skills (positive relationships and social awareness)  
9. What students have in common  
10. Listening skills  
11. Compliments  
12. Including one another  
13. Cooperating  
14. Leadership skills  
15. Problem solving skills and responsible decision making  
16. Dealing with Double D behaviors  
17. Dealing with annoying behaviors  
18. Dealing with teasing  
19. What is a bystander  
20. What is bullying  
21. Problem solving steps |

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS' SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, RESOURCES, ETC.:

- Thinking Curriculum
- Character Education
- Steps to Respect
- Peaceful Playgrounds
- Positive Behavior Programs (PBIS)
### Grades 6-8 SECOND STEP (started in 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM</th>
<th>VOCABULARY</th>
<th>SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Second Step Program is a universal prevention program designed to decrease aggression, bullying and substance abuse and to increase students' social skills and school related success. It is based on research on risk and protective factors related to aggression, bullying and substance abuse that can be addressed in classroom lessons. It is a developmental and sequential curriculum designed for the 6th through 8 grades. | • Group  
• Communication  
• Skills  
• Empathy  
• Active listening  
• Ally  
• Perspective  
• Respectful disagreements  
• Constructive Feedback  
• Positive Leader  
• Assertiveness skills  
• Action Steps  
• Negotiation and Compromise  
• (Win-Win)  
• Bullying  
• Bystander  
• Cyber Bullying  
• Sexual Harassment  
• Bullying in Dating  
• Relationships | The curriculum follows a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence of skills:  
1. Empathy and Communication  
2. Working in Groups  
3. Friends and Allies  
4. Considering Perspective  
5. Disagreeing Respectfully  
6. Leaders and allies  
7. Handling a Grievance  
8. Being Assertive  
9. Negotiating and Compromising  
10. Giving and Getting support  
11. Bullying Prevention  
12. Recognizing Bullying  
13. Responding to Bullying  
14. Bullying in Friendships  
15. Bystanders  
16. Cyber-Bullying  
17. Labels, Stereotypes and Prejudice  
18. Sexual Harassment  
19. Bullying in Dating |

**Gates Supplemental Programs:**

- 3 R’s, Respect yourself, respect others, respect the school  
- Behavioral expectations specific to settings  
- Anti-bullying Policy in handbook and on website  
- Rachel’s Challenge  
- AOL  
- Positive Behavior Programs (PBIS)
### Description of Program

Allies Not Bystanders is a 2.5 hour peer facilitated workshop offered to all 9th grade students in an effort to provide widespread awareness that can help shift the school's climate towards increased respect and ownership. The workshop involves various directed discussions, activities, short original video and role-playing exercises all designed to help raise awareness about the behaviors, attitudes and circumstances that lead to bullying, harassment, discrimination and other social forms of disrespect. The workshop encourages discussion about how and why being an ally instead of a bystander can contribute to the type of safe environment in which all members of a school community deserve to work, study and play. Participants are provided with preventative approaches to addressing the behaviors, attitudes and circumstances that lead to bullying, harassment, discrimination and other social forms of disrespect.

Each workshop consists of 12-25 student participants and 2-4 trained student peer facilitators. The program was developed using the Anti-Defamation League’s A World of Difference Institute Anti-Bias education curriculum and training manual.

The training, scheduling and implementation of this program is coordinated by the Scituate High School AOL Club members and club advisor. There is no budget or funding for this extensive program outside the stipend for the AOL Club Advisor.

### Vocabulary

- Perpetrator/aggressor/bully
- Ally
- Bystander
- Victim/target
- Anti-Bias
- Bias
- Stereotyping
- Prejudice
- Discrimination
- Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Scapegoating
- Manifestations of Prejudice and Discrimination (ableism, ageism, anti-Semitism, classism, heterosexism, racism, religious bigotry, sexism)
- Bullying Requires an Audience Triangle
- Pyramid of Hate
- Ground Rules (aka Ropes or Respect)
- Thanks but no thanks.

### Skills

From a World of Difference Institute Peer Trainers Manual:

1. Interpersonal skills
2. Critical thinking skills
3. Leadership skills
4. Skills in citizenship and civility
5. Conflict resolution skills
6. Problem-solving skills
7. Empathy and communication skills
8. Strategies for Unlearning Prejudices
9. Empathy Development
10. Self Esteem Development
11. Diverse role models
12. Cooperative Learning

---

**Scituate High School Supplemental Programs, Projects, Resources, etc.**

- **Supplemental Visuals:** Think bracelets (2006-Present) Think bracelet video, Bystanders Hold the Power Banner (2010), School Murals (2004, 2007)
- **"Thanks but no Thanks" campaign (2010)**
- **Supplemental Events:** Mix it Up Day campaign from Teaching Tolerance (Nov. 2007-present) Day of Silence from GLSEN (April 2006 - 2010) Rachel’s Challenge (Fall 2010) New England Youth Congress (March 2007-2010) ANB Peer Facilitator Training (Fall 2007-Present)
- **Supplemental Extra Curricular Activities:** Best Buddies, Pangea (Gay Straight alliance) ADL Club; Supplemental Elective Curriculum: Siet, Society and health elective Community Service Learning video (history elective)
Scituate Public Schools
K-6 Behavior/Bullying Tracking Report

Bullying is defined as repeated use of written, verbal, electronic or physical act or gesture that causes physical or emotional harm.

Report Submitted By: Incidents #
School: Cushing School
Date:
Time:
Place:

Student(s) performing inappropriate behavior(s):
- ____________________________ Homeroom:
- ____________________________ Homeroom:
- ____________________________ Homeroom:

Student(s) targeted (if applicable):
- ____________________________ Homeroom:
- ____________________________ Homeroom:
- ____________________________ Homeroom:
- "Is the target being targeted as a result of being in a protected class?" Yes or No

Behavior was witnessed by:
- ____________________________ Homeroom:
- ____________________________ Homeroom:
- ____________________________ Homeroom:

The Double Ds: (check)
- Dangerous: An action where someone could get hurt.
- Destructive: An action where something could get damaged/broken or someone being damaged or hurt emotionally.

Type of Behavior: (check)
- Physical:
  - Hitting
  - Kicking
  - Pushing
  - Property Damage
  - Other
- Social/Emotional:
  - Gossiping
  - Spreading Rumors
  - Ostracizing
  - Humiliating
  - Other
- Insulting Gestures
- Name Calling
- Teasing

Describe the situation:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
OVER for Response Actions

**Reporting Adult Response** *(check/initial/circle):*

**Teacher Response:**

___ Level I: Verbal Conference and Incident Report by __________________________

___ Level II: Verbal Conference, Incident Report, and Parent Call

**Target Family Contacted:**

YES - by: ____________________________________________

**Agressor Family Contacted:**

YES - by: ____________________________________________

___ Level III: Verbal Conference, Incident Report, Parent Call, After School Detention, and Parent Conference by __________________________

Principal Response:

___ Level IV: Verbal Conference, Incident Report, Parent Call, Suspension, and Parent Conference by __________________________

___ Level V: Verbal Conference, Incident Report, Parent Call, and notification of Outside Agencies by __________________________
## Incident Report Form

**MA Chapter 71 Section 37**

"Bullying", the repeated 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 victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

"Cyber-bullying", 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, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying 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 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 more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

### Target of Bullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alleged Aggressor(s) of Bullying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What Happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date and Time of Incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of Incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Incidents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Is the target being targeted as a result of being in a protected class?"

---

### Details of Incident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To your knowledge, has this occurred before?</th>
<th>Are there immediate safety or transportation concerns?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes _____ No X</td>
<td>Yes _____ No X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If needed, describe incident or concerns in more detail
### Gates Intermediate School
Internal Incident Report Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Investigation</th>
<th>Investigator</th>
<th>VP Meehan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional Follow-Up Dates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List Persons Interviewed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview(s) Narrative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Taken</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Made with Parent(s)</td>
<td>11-16-2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of Follow-Up Conferences (if needed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results of Follow-Up / Contacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the Incident Reported to the Office of the Superintendent? Yes _____ No X</td>
<td>Details:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the Incident Reported to the SRO / Police Department? Yes _____ No X</td>
<td>Details:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Final Report: <strong>/</strong>/__ Date Student Advised:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Signature of Investigator | Date**

This process applies to only situations where bullying is alleged. Disciplinary incidents will be reported using the school disciplinary action process.
Check list

Step One: Complete Incident Report Form

If a staff member or other adult witnesses or reports incident:

- Staff member completes incident report and gives to designated administrative staff member

If a student reports incident to staff member:

- Acknowledge student’s feelings.
- Determine if there are safety issues that must be addressed immediately.
- Staff member completes incident report and gives to designated administrative staff member.

Step Two: Conduct Investigation

Interview Target of bullying:

- Interview the target first, then the alleged aggressor.
- Target and alleged aggressor should be separated.
- Do not ask to see target in the alleged aggressor’s presence.
- Mediation should not be used with bullying situations.
- Encourage target to report any additional incidents with the alleged aggressor.

Interview the student accused of bullying:

- Identify the problem.
- Focus more on the alleged aggressor’s behavior, protecting the target’s confidentiality.
- In case of denial or if further information is needed, interview witnesses.
- Document the witness account.
- Make the alleged aggressor aware of consequences of retaliation against target and reporter.

Contact parent of target and alleged aggressor

- Keep a log: date and time called, summary of each conversation, follow up questions etc.

Step Three: Action Plan – Consequence, Monitoring and counseling

- Assign appropriate consequence, if appropriate.
- If the alleged aggressor denies the incident and there is insufficient evidence, tell the alleged aggressor that you hope s/he is right and that nothing happened, but you will continue to monitor behavior.
- Monitor safety of target.
- Guidance to counsel / follow up with target and aggressors – continue counseling if needed.
- Contact all teachers who have contact with target and aggressors.

Step Four: Document Incident and Consequences / Follow-up

- Document outcome of investigation on the Incident Report Form / Action Plan Form
- Follow up: provide update to appropriate staff member(s)
- Monitor students’ behavior
- Notify teachers who have contact with target and aggressor
Incident is reported
Assess for immediate safety issues

Conduct Investigation

Interview Target

Interview Alleged Aggressor

Interview Witness(es)

Initiate Action Plan

Contact Parent

Assign Consequences (if appropriate)

Complete Incident Report / Action Plan

Follow-Up: Monitor Behavior
Incident Report Form

MA Chapter 71 Section 37
"Bullying", the repeated 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 victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of Incident</th>
<th>See Narratives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To your knowledge, has this occurred before?  
Yes _____  No X

Are there immediate safety or transportation concerns?  
Yes X  No

If needed, describe incident or concerns in more detail
**Action plan – follow though**

<table>
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</table>

| Additional Follow-Up Dates |           |
| List Persons Interviewed  |           |
| interview(s) Narrative    |           |

| Action Taken |           |

| Contact Made with Parent(s) |           |
| 11-16-2010 |           |

| Dates of Follow-Up Conferences (if needed) |           |

| Results of Follow-Up / Contacts |           |

| Was the Incident Reported to the Office of the Superintendent? | Details: |
| Yes | No |

| Was the Incident Reported to the SRO / Police Department? | Details: |
| Yes _X_ No |

| Date of Final Report: ___/___/___ | Date Student Advised: 12/16/2013 |

**Signature of Investigator**

This process applies to only situations where bullying is alleged. Disciplinary incidents will be reported using the school disciplinary action process.
Check list

**Step One: Complete Incident Report Form**

**If a staff member or other adult witnesses or reports incident:**
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- Make the alleged aggressor aware of consequences of retaliation against target and reporter.

**Contact parent of target and alleged aggressor**
- Keep a log: date and time called, summary of each conversation, follow up questions etc.

**Step Three: Action Plan – Consequence, Monitoring and counseling**

- Assign appropriate consequence, if appropriate.
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Scituate High School
Internal Incident Report Form

- Guidance to counsel / follow up with target and aggressors – continue counseling if needed.
- Contact all teachers who have contact with target and aggressors.

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Incident is reported
Assess for immediate safety issues

Conduct Investigation

Interview Target
Interview Alleged Aggressor

Interview Witness(es)

Initiate Action Plan

Contact Parent
Assign Consequences (if appropriate)

Verbal
Written

Complete Incident Report / Action Plan

Follow-Up: Monitor Behavior
Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

You are receiving this notice of Procedural Safeguards for Alleged Victims of Bullying because you, as a parent or guardian of a student in the Scituate Public Schools, have brought to the attention of the District allegations of bullying.

It is the goal of the Scituate Public Schools to promote a safe and nurturing learning atmosphere for students free from all forms of bullying. In the interest of furthering this goal, and in compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014, the District has adopted a both a formal bullying policy and bullying prevention and intervention plan, which may include, when appropriate, referral to law enforcement agencies or other state agencies.

While the District policy and procedures for the report, investigation and resolution of alleged bullying seek to address such allegations in a timely, comprehensive and appropriate manner, those parents, guardians and/or students who are not satisfied with the actions of the District in response to an allegation or allegations of bullying may seek additional relief through the Problem Resolution Services of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which is administered through Program Quality Assurance (PQA) Services.

The process for accessing the Department’s Problem Resolution System and filing a complaint with the Department through PQA is as follows:

- You may contact the PQA via email to the compliance mailbox, send a fax, mail a letter, or telephone directly using the following contact information:

  Program Quality Assurance Services
  Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
  75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
  Telephone: 781-338-3700
  FAX: 781-338-3710
  Email: compliance@doc.mass.edu
  Web: http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa

- The Problem Resolution Intake Form is also available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/prs/

This process is available to anyone, including parents and students, who do not believe that the District is meeting legal requirements for education. The Problem Resolution System is staffed by intake coordinators and educational specialists, who will answer any questions you may have about your situation and/or assist you in initiating the complaint process.

For additional information, please contact the Department directly or visit the Department’s Problem Resolution Services/PQA website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/prs/.
APPENDIX C: SCITUATE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

BULLYING PREVENTION

The Scituate Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students, or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional, of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a 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 him/herself, or of damage to his/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.

“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
- photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as 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.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying
are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is 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 Scituate Public schools;

Bullying and cyber-bullying are 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 Scituate Public Schools if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include 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 plan shall apply to students and members of the school staff including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

The plan shall recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment 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.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.
The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

**Reporting**

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

The Scituate Public Schools will collect and report annually the following data to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: 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 the Department. Additionally, the Scituate Public Schools will administer a Department-developed student survey at least once every four years to assess “school climate and the prevalence, nature and severity of bullying in schools.”

**Investigation Procedures**

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target’s needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.
Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school’s resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school’s obligations under law.

Retaliation

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

Target Assistance

The Scituate Public Schools shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

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.
Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

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 Scituate Public Schools website.

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<th>First Reading</th>
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Legal References

Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 603 CMR 26.00 MGL 71:370; MGL 265:43, 43A; MGL 268:13B; MGL 269:14A

Policy Cross Reference

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
AC, Nondiscrimination
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
JBA, Student-to-Student Harassment
JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing