

## Anti-Bullying Protocol at American Academy

This protocol was designed to accompany the American Academy Discipline Policy which addresses additional relevant code of conduct and discipline from the Douglas County School District Student Rights and Responsibilities.

### PURPOSE

American Academy is committed to providing a safe, caring and positive environment to maximize the academic success of all students. Every member of this school community must take personal responsibility for the physical and emotional safety of one another to create a positive learning environment. It is a violation of school policy for any student to bully, harass or intimidate another student. Students that disrupt the operation of the school, interfere with the rights of others, or damage school/personal property will be held accountable for that behavior.

### BULLYING DEFINITION

Bullying is unwanted, intentional, aggressive and intimidating behavior, repeated over time that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

There are four sub-types of bullying:

1. **Verbal bullying** is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes: teasing, name-calling, inappropriate comments, taunting, and/or threatening.
2. **Social bullying**, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes: leaving someone out on purpose, telling other students not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about another student, and/or intentionally embarrassing someone in public.
3. **Physical bullying** involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes: hitting/kicking/pinching, spitting, tripping/pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, and/or making mean or rude hand gestures/unwanted touch.
4. **Cyberbullying** is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Cyberbullying includes: mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, (e.g. embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles).

*Note: In an effort to be concise throughout this Protocol, the perpetrator of bullying behavior is referred to as the "bully" however, school staff should be careful not to label a student as a "bully." It is best to refer to those students as "exhibiting bullying behavior" which focuses on the behavior rather than the person.*

## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

Critical to the establishment of an anti-bullying protocol is the development of a comprehensive anti-bullying policy and school-wide strategies for effective bullying prevention and intervention. Best practices in bullying prevention include:

- School establishes and enforces an effective anti-bullying policy that:
  - Clearly defines bullying behavior and provides examples
  - Clearly establishes school rules and expectations for all members of the school community
  - Communicates rules and expectations to all students, staff and parents
  - Requires staff to consistently enforce school rules and encourages students to take personal responsibility for creating a physically and emotionally safe learning environment
  - Provides additional instructional opportunities to address pro-social skills to prevent bullying
  - Makes age appropriate, non-punitive remediation a priority
  - Recognizes the importance of increased adult supervision in known “hotspots”
- School identifies a “Coordinator” responsible for:
  - Overseeing consequences and remediation as detailed in Bullying Behavior Matrix
  - Knowing federal and state definitions, requirements and ramifications for bullying, harassment and intimidation (refer to “Douglas County School District Student Rights and Responsibilities” for statutes and discussions about legal requirements and ramifications)
  - Tracking all reported bullying incidents
  - Ensuring bullying awareness training is available to all students, staff and parents
  - Securing data about the frequencies, types and locations of bullying in the school
- Social emotional learning skills are embedded throughout the curriculum
- School promotes a welcoming, caring, safe culture and climate
  - School actively seeks input regarding school climate
  - School regularly surveys stakeholders about school climate
  - All staff and students take personal responsibility for establishing a caring environment
  - School encourages and positively reinforces students’ reporting of bullying incidents

## **AA RESPONSE TO BULLYING AND PRACTICES**

American Academy staff must investigate and report all incidents of bullying and take appropriate action whether they personally observe incidents or learn of them by some other means. Investigation, reporting and action must occur even if the target does not file a formal complaint or does not express overt disapproval of the incident. Adult non-intervention establishes a climate of fear, reinforces students’ beliefs that bullying is “normal” and must be tolerated, and enables the bullying behavior. Furthermore, non-intervention may expose American Academy to potential liability.

American Academy's reporting system must be robust and comprehensive. It identifies who, what, where, when, why and how the bullying incident took place. All bullying incidents should be recorded, investigated and tracked. The coordinator responsible for investigating and tracking all bullying incidents should have experience in promoting pro-social skills. It may be necessary to have both a male and female staff person available to investigate some incidents.

Students should be offered a variety of ways to report bullying such as:

- Anonymous box located in a "safe" spot such as the counselor/psychologist, library, and/or principal's office
- Email or telephone
- In person to any staff member
- Peer or parent reports

### **STAFF RESPONSE TO BULLYING**

- 1) INTERVENE - Staff members must intervene immediately or as quickly as reasonably possible to address bullying behavior.
  - a) Identify bullying behaviors. Focus on the behavior not the person. Refer to the classroom or school rules.
  - b) Stop the behavior. Get in between target(s) and perpetrator(s) only if safe to do so. Resist the temptation to dismiss the bullying as normal ("boys will be boys" and "girls will be girls") behavior for that age.
  - c) Conference with the student(s) SEPARATELY.
- 2) INVESTIGATE – All reports of bullying incidents should be investigated and reported in a timely fashion – within 24 hours (when possible) of receiving initial report of bullying.
  - a) All reports of bullying should be addressed by any AA employee to whom bullying is reported or who observes actions that appear to constitute bullying. All staff should receive training to recognize what constitutes bullying under the American Academy definition. If there is any doubt on the part of the employee about whether a reported or observed action constitutes "bullying" under the definition, the incident should be reported to the school counselor who handles reports of bullying. In that way, reports of bullying will receive the appropriate and proper attention. The steps below are listed in a one page flow chart (on staff webpage).
  - b) The staff person responsible for investigating or who receives the report about bullying behavior should:
    - i) Use the Bullying Incident Report form (on staff webpage) to record details about the incident.
    - ii) Interview student(s) exhibiting bullying behavior and the target(s) *separately* to avoid further victimization of the target.
  - c) Engage the target first:
    - (i) Focus on his/her safety.
    - (ii) Reassure him/her that the bullying behavior will not be tolerated and that all possible steps will be taken to prevent a reoccurrence.
    - (iii) Ask what happened and how he/she feels about it, and if anyone else has been targeted.
    - (iv) Advise using HA-HA-SO strategies if appropriate.

- (v) Suggest seeing the school counselor if appropriate.
  - (vi) Ask student to report any future bullying.
  - (vii) Contact parents.
- d) For the bully:
- (i) Have the student identify the problem using an “I statement.” If they are unable to admit to a problem, say “I’ve been hearing that…” or “I have observed you…”
  - (iii) Ask, “What was wrong with what you did?” Praise honesty.
  - (iv) Ask, “What problem were you trying to solve?” (Not “Why did you do it?”)
  - (v) Ask, “Next time you have that problem, how will you solve it?”
  - (vi) Remind the student of the school rules and expectations for behavior.
  - (vii) Contact parents.
- e) Submit Bullying Incident Report form. This form will be received by the school counselor who will meet with the principal to discuss remediation and consequences based on the Bullying Behavior Matrix. School counselor and principal will determine whether bullying may also rise to the level of harassment based on protected categories under federal and state law, such as race, color, sex, national origin, disability, religion and sexual orientation, and take appropriate action as warranted.
- f) Take interim action to prevent bullying or retaliation during the course of the investigation.
- g) Work in collaboration with the school counselor and/or principal to determine remediation and consequences in cases of severe or repeated incidents. It may also be necessary to alert other teachers to the bullying behavior to ensure the safety of, and support for, the students involved.
- h) If another student reports bullying behavior to a staff member, do not dismiss it as tattling, particularly if the student reporting is trying to keep another student safe. Thank the student who made the report.
- 3) REPORT - All bullying incidents should be reported to the school counselor using the Bullying Incident Report form on the staff webpage.
- a) All information concerning complaints or incidents of bullying should be treated confidentially at all times. When talking with parents, teachers and administrators cannot name the other students involved and cannot indicate disciplinary measures utilized.
  - b) Inform the parents of the bully and the target of the behavior as quickly as possible. A call home the same day is preferable, followed by an appointment at school with the parents if necessary. Early intervention is most effective before patterns of behavior are established. Invite the parents to collaborate on a solution. Do not bring the parents of the target and the bully together.
- 4) REMEDIATION AND CONSEQUENCES - It is the responsibility of the staff to use violations of the school rules as opportunities to help students improve their social and emotional skills, accept personal responsibility for their learning environment, and understand consequences for poor choices and behaviors. A clear distinction exists between remediation and consequences.

- a) Remediation, intended to counter or “remedy” a behavioral mistake, can be an effective prevention practice. Remediation measures are intended to correct the problem behavior, prevent a reoccurrence, protect and provide support for the target and take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to bullying and harassment. Remediation measures allow the student an opportunity to reflect on behaviors, learn pro-social skills and make amends to those affected.
- c) Consequences, tend to be punitive in nature and should be used only when appropriate and almost always in conjunction with remediation measures.

\*Consequences and remediation should be applied based on the Bullying Behavior Matrix (attached) and considering a number of factors including:

Student Considerations:

- Age and developmental maturity of the students involved;
- Nature, frequency and severity of the behaviors;
- Relationships of the parties involved;
- Context in which the alleged incidents occurred;
- Patterns of past or continuing behaviors;
- Other circumstances that may play a role. School

Considerations:

- School culture, climate and general staff management of the learning environment;
- Social emotional and behavioral supports;
- Student-staff relationships and staff behavior toward the student;
- Family, community and neighborhood situation;
- Alignment with policies and procedures;

Examples of remedial measures and consequences may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

### Examples of Remedial Measures

#### *For Student Exhibiting Bullying Behavior*

- Develop a behavioral contract with the student. Ensure the student has a voice in the outcome and can identify ways he/she can solve the problem and change behaviors.
- Meet with parents/family to develop a family agreement to:
  - Ensure parent/family/student all understand school rules and expectations
  - Explain the long term negative consequences of bullying on all involved
  - Understand consequences if bullying behavior continues
- Meet with school counselor or school psychologist to:
  - Investigate potential mental health issues – what is happening and why?
  - Develop a learning plan with consequences and skill building
  - Consider other community support services
- Additional social skill training such as impulse control, anger management, developing empathy and problem solving.
- Arrange for apology – written is recommended; staff present when in-person
- Reflective essay to ensure student understands the impact of their actions on others

- Research and teach a lesson to class about bullying, empathy or similar topic (related to incident)
- Restitution – particularly if any personal items were damaged or stolen
- Restorative Practices (age appropriate)
- Follow-up conference with student

*For Target of Bullying Behavior*

- Meet with trusted staff member to:
  - Explore feelings about incident
- Develop a plan to ensure student’s emotional and physical safety at school
- Meet with school counselor or school psychologist to:
  - Ensure student does not feel responsible for behavior
  - Ask student to log behaviors in the future (if age appropriate)
  - Develop skills, tools, strategies to resist bullying
- Follow-up conference with student

*For Parents and Family of Bully and/or Target*

- Development of a family agreement
- Referral for family counseling
- Parent education workshops related to bullying and social emotional learning

*Environmental (Classroom, School Building)*

- School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing the bullying
- School policy and procedures revisions
- Communicate behavioral expectations with students, parents, and staff
- Modifications of student schedules, or routes traveling to/from school
- Increased supervision in known areas for bullying such as the hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, playground, school perimeter/carpool
- Increased supervision of student(s) before and after school, including carpool
- Professional development for staff to learn effective intervention and prevention strategies
- Involvement of parent-teacher organization

Examples of Consequences

- Admonishment/conference with student (verbal warning)
- Written warning
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Deprivation of privileges
- Detention
- Referral to Principal
- Parental Notification - Letter sent home to parent(s)
- Parental Notification - Phone call to parent(s)
- In school suspension

- Out of school suspension
- Legal action/report to law enforcement if required
- Expulsion

Resources:

Bullying Definition. (n.d.). Retrieved December 6, 2014, from <http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/index.html>

Colorado Legislation on Bullying  
House Bill 11-1254, Measures to Reduce the Frequency of Bullying in Schools

DuPage County Anti-Bullying Task Force Bullying Protocol (open source, January 2011)

DuPage Regional Office of Education. (n.d.). Retrieved December 6, 2014, from <http://www.dupage.k12.il.us/main/anti-bullying/anti-bullying.shtml>

**Bullying Behavior Matrix: Consequences and Remediation**

		<i>Nature and Severity of Behaviors</i>		
<i>Number of Past or Continuing Behaviors</i>	<u>Low Severity/First Offense</u>	<u>High Severity/Low Offense(s)</u>		
	Admonishment/conference with student (verbal warning) Temporary removal from the classroom Deprivation of privileges (recess, extracurricular) Parental notification  <i>Reflective essay</i> <i>Apology</i> <i>Additional pro-social skills training</i>	Referral to principal Detention (before/after school) Report to law enforcement if required Parental notification In school suspension Out of school suspension  <i>Apology</i> <i>Behavioral contract</i> <i>Additional pro-social skills training</i> <i>Research and instruct a lesson on bullying</i> <i>Hold meeting with parents</i> <i>Student to meet with school counselor/psychologist</i>		
	<u>Low Severity/Repeat Offense(s)</u>	<u>High Severity/Repeat Offenses</u>		
	Written warning Detention (before/after school) Referral to principal Parental notification In school suspension Out of school suspension  <i>Apology</i> <i>Behavioral contract</i> <i>Additional pro-social skills training</i> <i>Research and instruct a lesson on bullying</i> <i>Hold meeting with parents</i> <i>Student to meet with school counselor/psychologist</i>	In school suspension Parental notification Out of school suspension Report to law enforcement if required Expulsion  <i>Apology</i> <i>Behavioral contract</i> <i>Additional pro-social skills training</i> <i>Meet with school counselor/psychologist to investigate mental health issues</i> <i>Restitution</i> <i>Restorative Practices</i>		

*\*Remediation is in italics*



## American Academy Definition of Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, intentional, aggressive and intimidating behavior, repeated over time that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

### **Bullying Assessment Flow Chart**

Interview all students involved in the incident *separately*.  
(Include student exhibiting bullying behavior, target, bystanders, etc.)

#### Student who was targeted

1. Focus on his/her safety
2. Reassure him/her that bullying behavior will not be tolerated and all possible steps will be taken to prevent a reoccurrence
3. Ask what happened, how they feel about it, and if anyone else has been targeted
4. Advise using HA-HA-SO strategies if appropriate
5. Suggest seeing the school counselor if appropriate
6. Ask student to report any future bullying
7. Contact parents

#### Student demonstrating bullying behaviors

1. Have the student identify the problem using an "I Statement"
2. If unable to admit, say "I've been hearing that..."
3. Ask, "What was wrong with what you did?" Praise honesty
4. Ask, "What problem were you trying to solve?" (Not "Why did you do it?")
5. Ask, "Next time you have a problem, how will you solve it?"
6. Remind student of school rules and expectations for behavior
7. Contact parents

Fill out Bullying Incident Report Form  
(staff homepage)

Was it possibly a crime? (physical injury, weapons or threats, loss or damage to property?)

NO

YES

School Counselor receives form, meets with Principal to discuss remediation and consequences based on the Bullying Behavior Matrix

#### Immediate Referral to Office

Contact Principal/Assistant Principal who will determine if police involvement is necessary

Fill out Bullying Incident Report Form  
(staff homepage)