

**Mass Academy of Math and Science**  
**Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**  
**Updated September 2014**

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**APPENDIX A: SAMPLE BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

**I. LEADERSHIP**

*Leadership at all levels will play a critical role in developing and implementing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention 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. Leadership includes school administration, student leaders and parent governance.*

- Public involvement in developing the Plan. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Plan must be developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Consultation must include, at a minimum, notice and a public comment period before the Plan is endorsed by the school advisory council or equivalent authority.
- Assessing needs and resources. The Plan should be the school's or district's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, should assess the adequacy of current programs; review current policies and procedures; review available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. This "mapping" process will assist the Academy in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, the Academy should revise or develop policies and procedures; establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement; and set priorities.

At least once every four years beginning with 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.

- Planning and oversight.

The Director of the Academy is responsible for ensuring that the Plan is communicated and implemented consistently throughout the school. The Director is responsible for the coordination and oversight; all employees of the Academy are responsible for helping to implement the plan by understanding the role they play in the prevention and intervention of bullying and cyber-bullying and by acting in accordance with the Plan's expectations, including:

- receiving reports on bullying;
- collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes
- creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors
- planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law
- planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors
- choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use
- developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation

- of them
- amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct to, among other things, make clear that bullying of students by school staff or other students will not be tolerated
- leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials
- reviewing and updating the Plan each year, or more frequently.

D. Developing priority statements.

Mass Academy of Math and Science expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The school 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 recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, 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 identify specific steps it will take 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 all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school 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 Director is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan except when a reported bullying incident involves the Director as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Dean or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim. If the Director is the alleged aggressor, the Dean, or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

## II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- A. Annual staff training on the Plan. Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Director 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. 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, § 37O, the content of school-wide 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;
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students; and

- engaging staff and those responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors designed to correct misconduct, instill accountability in the school setting, and bullying behaviors

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 and bullying of students by school staff, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

### III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying resources. While disciplinary action is a necessary element of bullying intervention as well as a deterrent, the state law specifies that the need for accountability must be balanced with the need to teach appropriate behavior and to provide supports to assist both the target and the aggressor. The Academy has a procedure for determining when a student or students, including the target and/or the student aggressor, shall have access to professional counseling. Conferral among faculty, administrators and students will occur as part of the in-school process to informally assist students with difficulties and problem solving during the school day, while longer term counseling services will involve notification of the parents/guardians of the student(s). It is important to note that in-school counsel is limited in scope and is related to school-specific issues, while more intensive or long term counseling for social-emotional issues should be provided by resources outside the school district. The school district may engage the services of individuals with expertise, such as social workers, counselors, psychologists or psychiatrists, to assist families with accessing appropriate outside counseling and mental health services.

When a school becomes aware of a problematic situation involving bullying that may require a coordinated response to provide intervention, support, and follow up for the students involved, the school will convene a team that will include representation from the school administration and faculty, and in some cases outside psychological counsel, as deemed appropriate by the Director or designee. The team will determine and execute recommendations for access to resources and services within the school that are designed to assist students who are having difficulties related to bullying issues.

The Academy is fortunate to have strong ties with all the families of the one hundred or so students who attend the school. When situations that involve bullying occur, the Academy will directly work with them as necessary.

B. Students with disabilities. As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 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.

- C. Referral to outside services. The Academy has a procedure for referring students and families to outside services. Referrals must comply with relevant laws and policies.
- D. Additional areas may be identified by the Academy for professional development in order to meet the school's core social value: ***civility in social interactions, with an emphasis on support for one another.***

#### IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

*The law requires each school or district to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's or district's curricula. Curricula must be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development. Other resources are currently available on the Department's website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/bullying/> including [social and emotional learning guidelines](#). Plans should include specific information about local priorities and approaches that will be used, and how schools and districts will integrate the Plan into the school's and/or district's curricula.*

- 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 or school staff 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 cybersafety, 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. Instructional programming currently in place. The Academy will continue to utilize approaches already in place to teach students how to prevent bullying and how to report or intervene appropriately.

These include:

- Director led discussion of the expectations for language and behavior implied in the school's "civility" principle (in Handbook) at the start of the year, at mid-year, and at other times when a reminder is needed.

- Review of acceptable use policy at the start of the year in presentations by members of the WPI Computer Center and by computer science teacher in computer science classes on what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate use of the Internet.
- The use of all school meetings or student assemblies where staff emphasize expectations regarding bullying prevention, reporting, etc.

C. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts. 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 disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- 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 and using the Internet safely; and
- Implementing the RAD (rape aggression defense) curriculum as a required component for women
- Other resources can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/bullying/>
- [social and emotional learning guidelines](#)

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

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. An Academy staff member is required to report immediately to the Director or designee, or to the Dean or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor, 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. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community

including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form,<sup>2</sup> a voicemail box, a dedicated mailing address, and an email address.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, and other locations determined by the Director or designee; and 2) 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 Academy will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, custodians, advisors to extracurricular activities, 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 Director or designee, and the Dean or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor, 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 Director or designee, or to the Dean or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report as provided 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 Director or designee, or Dean or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor. 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 Director or designee, or Dean or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor.

### B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation – Allegations of Bullying by a Student.

#### 1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Director or designee

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for Sample Incident Reporting Form.

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 Director or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Director 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. (Include locally established student safety planning policies and procedures here.)

## 2. Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Director or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Director 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 Director or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Director 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 Director or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Director 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 Director 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 student aggressor.

In making this determination, the Director will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the Director or designee deems appropriate.

- C. Investigation. The Director 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 Director or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Director or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the Director or designee, other staff members as determined by the Director 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 Director or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Director or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Director or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation. (Align this with school or district procedures.)

- D. Determinations. The Director or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Director 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 Director 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 Director or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student 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 Director 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 Director 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 Director 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. Responding to a Report of Bullying by School Staff**

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

Upon the Director or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the Director or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district'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 Director or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Director 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 the school's or district'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 Director 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 Director 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 Director 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 Director 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 Director or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

## **VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES**

- A. Parent education and resources. The school or district 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 PSG, School Councils, or similar organizations.
- B. Notification requirements. Each year the school or district 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. The school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's 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. The school or district 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, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school 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/pgq>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also through the operations manager at Mass Academy.

## IX. DEFINITIONS

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, 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 a student's education.

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

School 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 school or district, 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, 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 school or district 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 school or district 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, or local school or district policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.