

PROPEL SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Propel Schools prohibits acts of harassment or bullying. In order for the students of Propel Schools to achieve high academic standards, it is necessary that the buildings be a safe and civil environment. Harassment or bullying, like any other disruptive or violent behavior, is conduct that disrupts a student's ability to learn as well as the learning of others. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying of any kind is expected of administrators, faculty, and staff as they provide positive examples for student behavior.

“Harassment or bullying” is considered to be any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts) that is reasonably perceived to as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or in a school vehicle.

“Harassment” is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

- Is directed at one or more students;
- Substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students;
- Adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from Propel's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the student, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this affect; and,
- Is based on a student's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have one of these characteristics.

“Bullying” is conduct that meets the following criteria:

- Is directed at one or more students;
- Occurs in a school setting;
- Is severe, persistent or pervasive; and
- Has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - hurting or threatening another person, either physically, emotionally or mentally;
 - Creating threatening environment;

- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students; or
- Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from Propel's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the student, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this affect; and,
- Is based on a student's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have one of these characteristics. (This provision is not part of the definition of bullying in the school code—I would take it out because it creates another thing you have to prove if you have a bullying case but if you want to keep it there is nothing per se wrong with it).

Propel Schools expects students to conduct themselves in a manner keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, and school personnel.

Propel Schools believe that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among students, parents and guardians, staff, and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

Propel Schools believes that the best discipline is self-imposed, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities for helping students to learn to assume responsibility and consequences for their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent discipline problems, and encourage students' abilities to develop self-discipline.

Considering bystander support of harassment or bullying can support these behaviors, Propel Schools prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The staff should encourage students to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the proper authority.

Propel Schools require its school administrators to develop and implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses to a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment or bullying. The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by school administrators in the development of the procedures for determining appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each act of harassment or bullying.

Factors for Determining Consequences

- Age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
- Degree of harm

- Surrounding circumstances
- Nature of severity of the behavior(s)
- Incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
- Relationship between parties involved
- Context in which alleged incident(s) occurred

Factors for Determining Remedial Measures

Personal

- Life skill competencies
- Experiential deficiencies
- Social relationships
- Strengths
- Talents
- Traits
- Interests
- Hobbies
- Extra-curricular activities
- Classroom participation
- Academic performance

Environmental

- School culture
- School climate
- Student-staff relationships and staff behavior towards the student
- General staff management of classrooms or other educational environments
- Staff ability to prevent and de-escalate difficult or inflammatory situations
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports
- Social relationships
- Community activities
- Neighborhood culture
- Family situation

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of harassment or bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with Propel's Code of Student Conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the behavior; and protect the victim of the act. Effective discipline should employ a school-wide approach to adopt a rubric of bullying offenses

and the associated consequences. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below;

Examples of Consequences:

- Admonishment
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Loss of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- Referral to disciplinarian
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Legal action
- Expulsion

Example of Remedial Measures

Personal

- Framing the aggressive behavior as a failed attempt to solve a real problem or reach a goal. The adult assists the misbehaving student to find a better way to solve the problem to reach a goal.
- Restitution and restoration
- Transformative conferencing/restorative justice
- Peer support group
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
- Supportive discipline to increase accountability for the bullying offense
- Supportive interventions, including participation in the Care Team, peer mediation, etc.
- Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the Behavior Support Coach
- Positive Behavioral Support Management Plan
- Involvement of school disciplinarian
- Student counseling
- Parent conferences
- Student treatment
- Student therapy

Environmental (Classroom, School building)

- Set a time, place, and person to help the bully reflect on the offending behavior, maintaining an emotionally-neutral and strength-based approach
- School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation, or bullying
- School culture change
- School climate improvement
- Adoption of research-based, systemic bullying prevention programs
- Modifications of schedules
- Adjustment in hallway traffic

- Modifications student routes or patterns traveling to and from school
- Targeted use of monitors
- General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff
- Professional development plans for involved staff
- Parent conferences
- Involvement of parent-teacher organizations, such as Parent Council
- Development of a general bullying response plan
- Peer support groups
- Law enforcement involvement

Propel Schools require the principal and/or associate principal at each school be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations to this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the building principal or principal's designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Propel Schools requires the principal and/or the principal's designee to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the principal and/or the principal's designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within three school days after a report or complaint is made.

Propel Schools prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances by the act.

Propel Schools prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Propel Schools requires school officials to annually disseminate the policy to all school staff, students, and parents along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of harassment and bullying that occur on school property, at school sponsored events, or on a school bus. The chief school administrator shall develop an annual process for discussing the policy on harassment and bullying with students and staff.

Approved April 17, 2007

Revised July 17, 2008

This policy is hereby incorporated into the Propel Code of Conduct.