

Norwell Public Schools



Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

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Regulation

Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014,

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2014/Chapter86>, which amended G.L. c. 71, §37O, the anti-bullying statute, and was signed into law on April 24, 2014. G.L. c. 71, §37O, as amended, requires school districts, charter schools, approved private day or residential schools, and collaborative schools to “recognize” in their bullying prevention and intervention plans that certain enumerated categories of students^[2] may be more vulnerable to being targets of bullying based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics. Such districts and schools must also include in the plan the specific steps they will take to support these vulnerable students and provide all students the skills, knowledge and strategies they need to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment. Under the new law, school districts, charter schools, approved private day or residential schools, and collaborative schools must notify parents and guardians of targets of bullying of the availability of the Department’s problem resolution system and assist these parents and guardians in understanding the problem resolution process. Chapter 86 also addresses the data reporting and collection obligations of school districts, charter schools, approved private day or residential schools, and collaborative schools, requiring them to collect and report the following data to the Department 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.^[1] (The Department is required to analyze the data and to issue a report annually to the legislature which contains statewide aggregated data on the nature and frequency of bullying in schools.) Additionally, Chapter 86 requires school districts, charter schools, approved private day or residential schools, and collaborative schools, to 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.”^[2] (The Department will use survey results to, among other things, assess the effectiveness of bullying prevention curricula and instruction and identify long-term trends and areas of improvement, and will make its findings available to school officials.) The law also authorizes school districts, charter schools, approved private day or residential schools, and collaborative schools to adopt an anti-bullying seal to represent its commitment to bullying prevention and intervention.

[1] G.L. c. 71 §37O(k). *The Department is required to analyze the data and to issue a report annually to the legislature which contains statewide aggregated data on the nature and frequency of bullying in schools.*

[2] G.L. c. 71, §37O(k).

[2] Newly amended G.L. c. 71, §37O(d)(3) reads in relevant part: *Each 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 1 or more of these characteristics*

Guiding Statement

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 except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal or the assistant principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating

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.

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.

In the development of this plan, Norwell Public Schools recognizes the following:

- Bullying is the use of power by one or more individuals over another to intentionally cause harm.
- There are many ways that bullying can manifest itself in school and in the community.
- Bullying can include, but is not limited to, physical acts, verbal acts and psychological acts.
- For the target, aggressor and bystanders bullying interferes with the learning and growth of students in academic and emotional ways.
- A safe learning environment is one in which every student is allowed to develop emotionally, academically and physically in a caring and supportive environment free from intimidation and abuse and provides all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

Leadership

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in the review and implementation of our Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (“the Plan”) in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote a positive school climate. Our leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. School Administrators and School Counselors at each building provide education and oversight for this plan. School Administrators seek feedback from the greater school and local community in reviewing, revising and implementing the Plan. The plan is reviewed bi annually using the information collected from climate surveys sent to students, families and staff, data analysis of bullying incidents and community feedback. This information is reviewed by district administrators at the Leadership retreat and reported out annually to the community. All reported incidents of bullying are reported to DESE as required.

Statement of Prohibition

Bullying is prohibited:

(i) on school grounds, 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, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Norwell School Committee Policy

BULLYING PREVENTION

Norwell 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 Norwell 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 Norwell 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 a school staff including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals. 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.

Investigation Procedures

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly initiate investigations procedures aligned with JICFB-R: Regulations for the Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy.

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

Norwell 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.

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 PK 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 Norwell Public Schools' website.

LEGAL Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as
REFS: amended
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
603 CMR 26.00
M.G.L. 71:37O; 265:43, 43A; 268:13B; 269:14A

CROSS REFS: AC, Nondiscrimination
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
JBA, Student-to-Student Harassment
JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing
JK, Student Discipline Regulations

Adopted: November 18, 2013

Norwell Public Schools
Norwell, Massachusetts

Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

I. OFFICIALS FOR REPORTING

The building principal (or his/her designee) is responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations of this Policy at the school level. A report or complaint of a violation of this Policy involving a principal should be filed with the District Complaint Officer (Director of Student Services), the Alternate District Complaint Officer (Director of Teaching, Learning & Technology), or the Superintendent of Schools. Upon receipt of complaint, the Superintendent of Schools may notify the District Complaint Officer to conduct an investigation on his behalf.

The District Complaint Officer is responsible for receiving and addressing reports or complaints of violations of this Policy at the district level. A report or complaint involving the District Complaint Officer should be filed with the Superintendent of Schools; a report or complaint involving the Superintendent of Schools with the School Committee. Upon receipt of complaint regarding the Superintendent of Schools, the Norwell School Committee may notify the District Complaint Officer to conduct an investigation on its behalf.

II. REPORTING PROCEDURES: GENERAL OVERVIEW

1. Any school employee, school committee member, independent contractor, or school volunteer who becomes aware or has a reasonable belief that bullying/cyberbullying is occurring, has occurred or may have occurred on school property or in a school-related activity must promptly report the alleged incident(s) to the designated official.
2. Any student or other person (who is not a school employee, independent contractor or school volunteer) who becomes aware or has a reasonable belief that bullying/cyberbullying is occurring, has occurred or may have occurred on school property or in a school-related activity is strongly encouraged to and should promptly report the incident(s) to a designated official. In situations where a student or other person does not feel comfortable reporting the incident to a designated official, they may report it to a trusted school employee, who must promptly transmit the report to a designated official.
3. When a report or complaint involves physical injury, the building principal (or his/her designee) will promptly report the incident to the Superintendent of Schools and the District Complaint Officer and/or his designee.
4. All complaints or reports about a violation of this Policy must be documented on the District's Reporting/Complaint Form. The form is available from designated officials. If a complainant or reporter is either unwilling or unable to complete the District's Reporting/Complaint Form, the designated official who receives the oral complaint or report will promptly prepare a written report, by filling out the District's Reporting/Complaint Form, using, to the extent practicable, the reporter's or complainant's own words to describe the potential violation.
5. If the complaint occurs at the school level, the designated official will promptly provide the principal with the completed Reporting/Complaint Form (or to the District Complaint Officer, if the principal is the subject of the complaint), with a copy to the District Complaint Officer. If the complaint occurs at the district level, the designated official will promptly provide the completed Reporting/Complaint Form

to the District Complaint Officer.

III. FILING A COMPLAINT OR REPORT

1. The complainant or reporter files a written complaint or report with a designated official, using the District's Reporting/Complaint Form, identifying the name(s) of the subject of the complaint, if known; describing the facts and circumstances of the incident or pattern of behavior; providing the time(s) and date(s) of the incident(s); and identifying any witnesses and relevant documentary information.
2. A complainant or reporter may also file an oral complaint or report. In those circumstances, a designated official will complete the District's Reporting/Complaint Form based on the oral information, using, to the extent practicable, the complainant or reporter's own words. The complainant will sign the Reporting/Complaint Form.
3. Anonymous reporting of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation can be made either through the completion of an online anonymous report (available on our main website at www.norwellschools.org and also on all school website). Additionally, anonymous reports can be made via telephone to any school or district office or via completed and mailed report forms (mailed to any district office or school building).
4. Even where the designated official does not obtain the identity of, or cooperation by, the alleged victim(s), the District will investigate the allegations, and proceed to Informal or Formal Proceedings, to the extent practicable.

IV. FORMAL VS. INFORMAL PROCEEDINGS

1. After the school principal (or his/her designee), or the District Complaint Officer, receives a complaint or report, the District must determine whether to resolve the complaint or report through Formal or Informal Proceedings.
2. After receipt of a report, the designated official will initially investigate the veracity of the claims and shall verbally notify the parents of both the alleged target and alleged aggressor. The parents of the alleged target will receive a letter, copied to the Norwell Police Department, which outlines their right to report the alleged incident to the Norwell Police Department at any time throughout the process.
3. In reports of bullying/cyberbullying among staff members the designated official will meet with both the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to gather additional information, as necessary.
4. The school principal (or his/her designee)s 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.
5. If the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, determines that
 - a. the allegation is serious enough that it appears to place the complainant or any other person at physical risk;
 - b. the incident has resulted, or may result, in a criminal charge;

- c. the incident involves a referral to the Department of Children and Families;
 - d. the allegation involves a serious form of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation;
 - e. the District has intervened with the alleged student offender under the purview of this policy or procedures;
 - f. there is a pending Formal Proceeding against the subject of the complaint;
 - g. the subject of the complaint has previously been found to have violated this Policy after Formal Proceedings;
 - h. or that a Formal Proceeding is otherwise appropriate under the circumstances,
- then the designated official must commence a Formal Proceeding (as delineated under Section VI). If none of the aforementioned factors are variables in the presenting complaint then Informal Proceedings (as delineated under Section V) must commence.

5. For allegations or incidents that do not require a Formal Proceeding, a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, may at his/her discretion apply either the Student Code of Conduct or initiate an Informal Proceeding. If the designated official deems it appropriate, (s)he may initiate an Informal Proceeding to obtain a voluntary agreement between the complainant and alleged offender that will effectively correct the problem and end the complained of conduct. The primary focus of an Informal Proceeding is resolution through non-disciplinary corrective action, although a resolution may also include disciplinary action.

6. Nothing in this Policy limits the District or school taking immediate interim disciplinary action as set forth in the school's disciplinary code and policies.

V. PROCEDURES FOR INFORMAL PROCEEDINGS

STEP ONE: Investigation and Explanation

Upon the initiation of an Informal Proceeding, the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will separately meet in a timely manner with the complainant and the subject of the complaint and any/all reported witnesses to ascertain the veracity of the complaint. Following the informal investigation, the District Complaint Office, or designee, will meet with the involved parties to provide an overview of the process, the information ascertained through the process, the nature of the complaint, explain the prohibition against retaliation, and determine the corrective action the complainant seeks.

STEP TWO: Proposed Resolution

If appropriate after adequate investigation, the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will propose a resolution. If the complainant, the alleged offender and their parent(s) or guardian(s) agree with the proposed resolution, the designated official will write down the resolution, and the complainant and the subject of the complaint, and their parent or guardian, if present, will sign it, and each person will receive a copy. At the meeting, the designated official will again explain the prohibition against retaliation.

STEP THREE: Monitoring

A designated official will monitor the situation, and will follow up with the complainant at least weekly for two months to determine whether there are further incidents or concerns. The designated official will maintain a written record of the follow-up.

STEP FOUR: Initiate Discipline and/or Formal Proceeding

If the complainant and alleged offender cannot agree to an informal resolution, or if at any time after resolution the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, determines that the problem is not corrected, the District may apply the Student Code of Conduct or commence a Formal Proceeding.

File Retention: If the complaint occurs at the school level, the principal (or the District Complaint Officer, if the principal is the subject of the complaint), will maintain in a separate confidential file the

District's Reporting/Complaint Form, information obtained through inquiry and investigation, and the proposed and agreed-to resolution, if any, and will provide a copy of the file to the District Complaint Officer and maintain a copy of the file in the applicable student record or employee personnel file.

If the complaint occurs at the district level, the District Complaint Officer will maintain the file.

The confidential file shall travel from school official to school official as the student progresses through their educational career in Norwell Public Schools.

VI. PROCEDURES FOR FORMAL PROCEEDINGS

STEP ONE: Preliminary Investigation and Explanation

The designated official will separately meet in a timely manner with the complainant and the subject of the complaint, and, if students, with their parent(s) or guardian(s), to tell them about the formal process, explain the prohibition against retaliation, and determine the remedy the complainant seeks.

The designated official will also explain that the investigation will be kept as confidential as possible, but that the District cannot promise absolute confidentiality, and may not be able to withhold the complainant's identity from the subject of the complaint, since such a promise could interfere with the District's ability to enforce its Policy, conduct a fair and thorough investigation, or impose disciplinary or corrective action.

STEP TWO: Formal Investigation

A designated official will conduct an investigation in accordance with the procedures described in Section VII, Procedures for Conducting Formal Investigations.

STEP THREE: Findings and Written Report

The designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will determine whether the allegations have been substantiated, and whether the Policy, or if the subject of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct has been violated. If the complaint is substantiated, the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will decide, based on the investigative findings, on the appropriate action. If legal issues arise, the designated official will seek the advice and guidance of legal counsel for the District. The designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will prepare a written report that includes the investigative findings, the investigative steps taken, and the reasons for those findings. These findings will specify whether the allegations have been substantiated, whether the Policy, or if the subject

of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct, has been violated, and any decision for disciplinary and corrective action.

STEP FOUR: Notification and Disposition

The designated official will promptly notify the complainant and the subject of the complaint in writing to let them know whether the complaint has been substantiated. If the complaint is substantiated, the designated official will also promptly notify the complainant of any non-disciplinary corrective action imposed to protect him/her from future Policy violations.

If the complaint is substantiated and the offender remains a student in the school, the designated official will meet with the offender and his/her parent or guardian, to describe the disciplinary and/or corrective action imposed, the school's expectations for future behavior and the potential consequences for retaliation or future violation of the Policy. If the subject of the complaint is an employee, the principal, the employee's supervisor or the Superintendent will impose any disciplinary or corrective action.

Any disciplinary or corrective action against a student or employee must conform to the due process requirements of federal and state law. Any right of appeal from a disciplinary decision is governed by the Student Code of Conduct, the school's disciplinary code, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and Massachusetts and federal law.

If the District's investigation results from a third party report, the designated official will inform that person that the District has taken steps consistent with the Policy, while not providing information about any disciplinary action imposed or any other information that would violate applicable state and federal confidentiality laws or student record regulations.

STEP FIVE: Police Referral

After the investigation has concluded, if the findings identify that bullying has occurred, the principal or District Complaint Coordinator shall report the findings of the formal investigation to the Norwell Police Department. It is the responsibility of the Norwell Police Department to initiate a criminal investigation, if deemed necessary, through its independent evaluation of events.

File Retention: If the complaint occurs at the school level, the principal (or the District Complaint Officer, if the principal is the subject of the complaint), will maintain in a separate confidential file the District's Reporting/Complaint Form, information obtained through inquiry and investigation, and the proposed and agreed-to resolution, if any, and will provide a copy of the file to the District Complaint Officer and maintain a copy of the file in the applicable student record or employee personnel file.

If the complaint occurs at the district level, the District Complaint Officer will maintain the file.

The confidential file shall travel from school official to school official as the student progresses through their educational career in Norwell Public Schools.

STEP SIX: Monitoring and Follow-Up Actions

A designated official will monitor the situation, and will follow up with the complainant at least weekly for two months to determine whether there are further incidents or concerns, and whether the corrective action imposed has been effective.

The designated official will maintain a written record of the follow-up.

The complainant may ask the District Complaint Officer to review, and, if appropriate, revise any non disciplinary corrective action imposed through a Formal Proceeding, if the complainant believes that the corrective action is not adequate to protect him/her from future bullying/cyberbullying.

VII. PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING FORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

Prompt and Thorough Investigations

Except where Informal Proceedings are initiated, the school or District, through a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will promptly investigate all reports or complaints of an alleged violation of this Policy (even where the offender is unknown), as set forth below. The nature and duration of an investigation will depend on the circumstances, including the type, severity and frequency of the alleged conduct. The goal of an investigation is to obtain an accurate and complete account of all incidents and circumstances deemed relevant to the allegations of the complaint. No complaint is considered frivolous; on the other hand, culpability is never presumed. These procedures are intended to protect the rights of a victim and the rights of a wrongfully accused individual.

Emergencies

School officials will immediately call 911 in case of a threat of imminent physical harm or actual physical harm to a school community member or where police, fire, medical, or other emergency assistance is needed.

Opening the Formal Investigation

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will promptly undertake an investigation.

Investigative Procedure

The designated official investigating the incident will gather and preserve evidence, and identify all involved parties and witnesses. The investigation will generally consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the subject(s) of the complaint and others who witnessed or may have potentially relevant knowledge about the alleged incident or circumstances giving rise to the report or complaint. Interviews will be conducted in a manner that protects the privacy of individuals to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

The designated official should take notes during interviews, or prepare them soon thereafter, for the purpose of maintaining accurate records. The designated official will also generally review and evaluate any other information or document, including video recordings, voice mails, e-mails, websites, text messages, instant messages, or other items deemed relevant to the allegations, and information regarding any prior incident(s) committed by the subject of the complaint.

Communication during Investigation

Throughout the investigatory and complaint resolution process, the designated official will make reasonable efforts to regularly inform the complainant and the subject of the complaint and their parent(s) or guardian(s) of the status of the complaint, and the anticipated timing for concluding the investigation, and making a determination. The designated official will notify each person interviewed or made aware of the investigation that the investigation is confidential and should not be discussed with other students or District employees. The designated official will tell them that the District will not tolerate retaliation against the complainant or reporter, or anyone else who cooperates with the investigation.

Timeline for Formal Investigations

The designated official will complete their investigation as soon as practicable, not normally to exceed more than fifteen (15) business days after receipt of the complaint or report, except for good cause or with consent of the parties (as documented in the investigatory file). The designated official will expedite the investigation of any claim involving physical violence or serious threats of harm.

Ensuring Safety during Investigation

The designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will take any step he/she determines is necessary and/or advisable to protect, to the extent practicable, the complainant, witnesses, and other individuals from further incidents or from retaliation pending the outcome of the investigation. Those steps for students may include, but are not limited to, ordering interim disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct, appropriate adult supervision, reassigning classroom seating, temporarily transferring the student subject of the complaint from his/her class(es) with the complainant or to an alternative school assignment, instructing the subject of the complaint to avoid communication or contact with the complainant and to maintain a safe distance (for e.g., fifteen feet) from the complainant while on school property or in school-related activities, and monitoring compliance and reporting non compliance of protective orders issued by a court.

Prior to a resolution of the complaint or report, the designated official will make reasonable efforts to monitor the success of the interim measures in achieving their goals. At the discretion of a school and/or District administrator, a student complainant may also temporarily transfer classes or schools, where available, but only where the student and his/her parent or guardians voluntarily consent to the transfer.

Target Assistance

The designated official (or his/her designee) will make appropriate referrals for target assistance, including counseling and crisis intervention, if requested, or as needed.

Target Non-Cooperation

Where a violation of the Policy has been reported by a third party and the alleged victim fails to cooperate with the investigation, or denies the incident occurred, disciplinary and corrective action may be precluded, or limited, depending on the circumstances and the availability of information from other sources.

False Charges

Any person who makes knowingly false charges or brings a malicious complaint is subject to disciplinary and/or corrective action.

Law Enforcement Notification

After an investigation has concluded that had determined that bullying has occurred, the principal or District Complaint Coordinator shall report the findings of the investigation to the Norwell Police Department. It is the responsibility of the Norwell Police Department to initiate a criminal investigation, if deemed necessary through its evaluation of events.

VIII. BASIS FOR DETERMINING WHETHER POLICY VIOLATED

A designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will determine whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this Policy. The determination will be based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances, including the context, nature, frequency and severity of the behavior, how long the conduct continued, where the incident(s) occurred, the number of persons involved in the wrongful conduct, the ages of and relationships between the parties, past incidents or patterns of behavior, and whether the conduct adversely affected the education or school environment of the victim or other school community member.

IX. CONFIDENTIALITY

The District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the subject(s) of the complaint, and the witnesses to the extent possible consistent with its obligations under federal and state law and regulations and its Policy to investigate, report, and take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action, and consistent with applicable and state and federal confidentiality laws and student record regulations.

X. DISCIPLINARY AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

If a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, concludes that the subject of the complaint has violated this Policy, the District will in a timely manner impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action reasonably calculated to end the complained of conduct, deter future conduct, and protect the complainant(s) and other similarly situated individuals. In imposing disciplinary and corrective measures the District will take into account harm the victim and other members of the school community suffered and any damage to school climate or property. The decision whether discipline is imposed and the nature of any disciplinary action must comply with the District and school's disciplinary policies.

Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Students

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a student may include, but is not limited to, a written warning; classroom or school transfer; short-term or long-term suspension; exclusion from participation in school

sponsored functions, after-school programs, and/or extracurricular activities; limiting or denying access to a part or area of a school; exclusion, expulsion, or discharge from school; adult supervision on school premises; parent conferences; an apology to the victim; awareness training (to help students understand the impact of their behavior); participation in empathy development, cultural diversity, anti-harassment, anti-bullying or intergroup relations programs; mandatory counseling, or any other action authorized by and consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and/or school disciplinary code.

Discipline for Students with Disabilities

The District complies with the federal and state law requirements that apply to the discipline of students with disabilities, including the federal “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004” (“IDEA 2004”).

Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Employees

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school employee may include, but is not limited to, a written warning, suspension, transfer, demotion, removal from certain duties, employment termination, supervision, training, and counseling.

Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Independent Contractors

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning an independent contractor may include, but is not limited to, a request to the employer of the independent contractor to warn, suspend or terminate its employee; limiting or denying the individual contractor access to school premises or school-related activities; terminating the contract with the District or school, and training

Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning School Volunteers

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school volunteer may include, but is not limited to, a written warning, suspending or terminating the volunteer relationship, limiting or denying access to school premises or school-related activities, supervision and training.

Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Other School Community Members

Corrective action concerning any other school community member, including parents and legal guardians of students, and visitors to District schools may include, but is not limited to, a warning; counseling; and limiting or denying the parent, guardian or visitor’s access to school premises or school related activities.

XI. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

Prevention and Remediation

The District will employ a variety of prevention and remediation strategies to maintain to the extent practicable a safe school climate conducive to learning, and ensure that all school community members assume responsibility for their behavior and its consequences.

Conformance with Laws and Applicable Contracts

Any disciplinary or corrective action taken for violation of this Policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Massachusetts and federal law, and District policies.

Oversight of District Compliance

The District designates Suzan Theodorou, Director of Student Services for Norwell Public Schools as the District Complaint Officer, who, under the supervision of the Superintendent, will ensure the successful administration of and compliance with this Policy. The District designates Warren MacCallum, Director of Finance, Operations & Technology for Norwell Public Schools as the District's Alternate Complaint Officer. The District will post conspicuously in the central office and in each school the name of the District Complaint and Alternate Complaint Officers, their mailing address, telephone number and email address.

Annual Report

The District will prepare an annual report to the School Committee that includes a compilation and analysis of reported and substantiated incidents under this Policy; any corrective action imposed (without student identifying information); relevant training; and any supporting activities or programs employed.

Training and Professional Development

Annual Staff Training

Annual training for all school staff on the BPIP 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 will be 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.

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 and districtwide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- 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;
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- 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 includes:

- 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.

Written Notice to Staff

Norwell Public Schools 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, the code of conduct and in the yearly Civil Rights Training materials.

Access to Resources and Services

Norwell Public Schools currently employs a number of faculty/staff that may provide intervention and support services to students. These include, but are not limited to:

Cole School Counselor
Cole School School Psychologist
Vinal School Counselor
Vinal School School Psychologist
Norwell Middle School Counselor
Norwell Middle School Counselor
Norwell Middle School Counselor
Norwell High School Counselor
Norwell High School Counselor
Norwell High School Counselor
Norwell High School Counselor
Norwell High School Psychologist
Norwell School Resource Officer
District Wide Behavior Specialist
District Wide Social Worker

All of the above staff members are able to provide counseling, social skills training and refer students and families to outside resources

Current Programs in Place to Support Students

District Wide

Social Health Curriculum and Monthly Themes, K-12, Prevention

- September: Understanding Ourselves
- October: Understanding Others
- November: Peaceful Community
- December: Understanding Differences
- January: Wellness
- February: Safety
- March: Decisions & Choices
- April: Responsibility
- May: Global Society
- June: Moving Forward

Norwell School Resource Officer, K-12, Prevention

- Provides consultation, staff development and student education.

Parent Programs, K-12, Prevention

- Parent programs are provided throughout the school year to address a range of topics relevant to students and families.

Mediation between two students, K-12, Intervention

- Used as a way of resolving disputes between two or more parties. The mediator will assist in the negotiation of what might be a fair or reasonable settlement and set guidelines for future interactions.

Behavior Intervention Plan, K-12, Intervention

- An individual behavior intervention plan is a detailed plan for implementation of the changes in antecedents, consequences, and replacement behaviors, which have been identified to help the student learn more appropriate behaviors. A plan can be created when warranted based on student behavior.

Safety Plans, K-12, Intervention

- A safety plan can be created to help a student and/or family develop tools in advance of potentially dangerous situations.

Elementary Programmatic Overview

The Cole and Vinal Schools offer a variety of school wide programs which are aimed at addressing developmentally appropriate social and emotional skill development. The Great Body Shop, Second Step, Coping Cat, and Calm Classroom are schoolwide curriculum resources that are spiraling in nature, meaning, each grade level builds upon skills and lessons taught in previous years. There are many ways the counselors stay connected to the students at the Cole and Vinal Schools. They are visible in the hallways, classrooms, lunchroom, and at recess on a regular basis. Counselors schedule Tier 1 social/emotional skills lessons, weekly lunch/recess groups, and small group instruction in the guidance office. Periodic magic circle/class meetings are presented at each grade level addressing various topics of skills development (listed below). Counselors often facilitate peer mediations for students in conflict and provide opportunities for students who would like to meet in private to discuss a feeling or concern.

Grade Level Topics

Kindergarten:

Bus Expectations

Feelings: Sad, Mad, Happy, Angry, Excited, Frustrated, Disappointed, etc.

Personal Space

Impulse Control

Introduction to Bullying Prevention

Sexual Abuse Prevention Program

How to be a friend -Empathy

Stress Management- Flexible Thinking

First Grade:

Telling vs. Tattling - Knowing the Difference
Whole Body Listening
Let Me Choose/Decision Making
Bullying Prevention
Differences - Empathy
Stress Management

Second Grade:

Self Regulation (Impulse Control)
Stress Management
Assertiveness
Sexual Abuse Prevention Program
Bullying Prevention
Making friends - Empathy

Third Grade:

Empathy
Perspective Taking
Conflict Resolution
Bullying Prevention
Stress Management
Self-Esteem - Intrinsic Motivation

Fourth Grade:

Sexual Abuse Prevention Program
Fairness
Girls/Boys Group - Dos' and Don'ts about Friendship
Problem Solving
Bullying Prevention
Empathy

Fifth Grade:

Bullying Prevention
Celebrating Differences
Responsibility
Conflict Resolution
Puberty
Stress Management
Empathy

Responsive Classrooms, K-5, Prevention

- The Responsive Classroom is an approach to elementary teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. The goal is to enable optimal student learning. Created by classroom teachers and backed by evidence from independent research, the Responsive Classroom approach is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. The approach therefore consists of classroom and school wide practices for deliberately helping children build academic and social-emotional competencies.

Second Step, K-5, Prevention

- The Second Step Bully Prevention instructs students in how to recognize, report and refuse bullying. This program helps students develop strong bonds to school, solve problems without anger, and treat others with compassion. These social skills support academics and form the foundation for happy, healthy kids who succeed.

Don't Laugh at ME, K-5, Prevention

- The Don't Laugh At Me Program is a curricula, videos, and CD for use by teachers, administrators, parents and other educational advocates and practitioners.

C.A.R.E.S, K-5, Prevention

- Students are taught to internalize the skills of caring, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.

Quit It, K-3, Prevention

- Quit it! is a research-based, school-wide program that provides the tools to address teasing and bullying proactively. The Quit It program is taught by Peer Educators from NHS.

Counselors in the Classroom K-5, Prevention

- School counselors work with teachers to present on the following topics: Understanding Self and Others, Teasing and Bullying, Telling vs. Tattling, Stress Management , Making Good Choices, Managing Angry Feelings and Making Friends
- Class Meetings, K-5, Prevention
- Students will have periodic class meetings with the school counselor either in the classroom or during the students' library time to discuss a variety of topics and feelings.
- Assemblies, K-5, Prevention
- Assemblies happen throughout the year for both students in parents, topics in the past have included Conflict Resolution, Alone at Home Safety, Internet Safety, Water Safety, Healthy Eating and Fire Safety.
- Mix it up Days, K-5, Prevention
- A lunch activity where students are encouraged to meet new friends by sitting at a different table.
- No Kidding about Bullying, 3-6, Prevention and Intervention
- No Kidding About Bullying gives educators a diverse range of activities they can use to help kids build empathy, manage anger, work out conflicts, and stop bullying by peers. There are 125 mini-lessons that can be used as a stand-alone curriculum or a complement to bullying prevention and character education programs already in place.

Lunch Groups, K-5, Intervention

- Small groups of students meet with a school counselor to work on social skills and make new friends. Short-Term Work with Individuals or Small Groups, K-5, Intervention
- This work can be around the following topics: Social Skills Training, Bullying Divorce Adjustments/Changing Families, Our voices/Ourselves

Norwell Middle School

Guidance Class, 6, Prevention

- Students in grades 6 (previously 6-8) will each take a class for one quarter called “Guidance”. This class is taught by the school counselor with some lessons also being taught in grade 6 by a community Police Officer. The Health teachers as well as the Family Consumer Science teachers also supplement the program with additional Social and Emotional lessons. The topic of sexuality and sexual development and substance abuse are also addressed in the Health classes.

Mini Teams, 6-8, Prevention

- “Mini-Team” Program which meets monthly and addresses many topics related to the monthly Social Health themes

Counselors in the Classroom 6-8, Prevention

- school counselor s work with teachers to present on the following topics: Cliques, Stress Management, Boy/Girl Relationships, Anger Management/Conflict Resolution, Diversity- Accepting Differences and Career Development

Life Skills Curriculum, 6-8, Prevention

- The Counselor uses the Lifeskills Curriculum and addresses topics such as Drug and Alcohol Abuse (police officer), Smoking (police officer), Goal Setting and Decision Making, Social Skills training, Assertiveness Training, Anger Management, Stress, Peer Pressure, Conflict Resolution, Advertisement, Bullying, Acceptance and Tolerance of Others. In addition, topics such as Relationship Violence, Healthy Relationships, Sexual Abuse Prevention, Sexual Harassment are also addressed. There is also a focus on Internet and Technology Safety, which is addressed through a yearly assembly by the Assistant District Attorney

Assemblies, 6-8, Prevention

- Assemblies happen throughout the year for both students in parents, topics in the past have included dating Violence, HIV Education, Substance Abuse Prevention Speakers, Developing A Positive Attitude, (Deanna’s Fund, Portrait Artist, Emergency Room Nurse, Assistant District Attorney, etc., Rachel’s Challenge, John Halligan

Full Value Contract, Grade 6, Prevention

- The middle school has a full value contract that all students must commitment to and use as guidelines.

Mix it up Days 6-8, Prevention

- A lunch activity where students are encouraged to meet new friends by sitting at a different table. Clubs and Activities
- Afterschool groups, such as Best Buddies and Chain Link's work to create friendship and a positive school environment through kindness and friendship.

Lunch Groups, 6-8, Intervention

- Small groups of students meet with a school counselor to work on social skills and make new friends. Short-Term Work with Individuals or Small Groups, 6-8, Intervention
- This work can be around the following topics: Social Skills Training, Divorce Adjustments/Changing Families, Our voices/Ourselves - Healthy Female Development, Peer Tutoring

Naviance 6-8 Prevention

Norwell High School

Advisory, 9-12, Prevention

- High School students participate in a monthly Advisory Program which is led by a faculty member and a Peer Educator and where these topics may be addressed as well. May topics related to Social and Emotional Health are addressed during Health Classes through the Comprehensive Health Curriculum. X-day Presentations, 9-12, Prevention
- Assemblies happen throughout the year for both students and parents, topics in the past have included Safety, Substance Abuse Education, Relationship Violence and Healthy Relationships etc, as well as programs to address Depression and how to support and help peers.

Peer Educators, 11-12, Prevention

- Students who serve as role models and facilitators of advisory and navigate the HS scene. Also teaches social health lessons to elementary Freshman Team Building Day, 9, Prevention
- A day to introduce the High School to freshman and address concerns about the transition.

Health Class, 9-10, Prevention

- Students are taught lessons from the social health curriculum

How Not to Keep A Secret, 11-12, Prevention

- Yearly training for students to recognize signs depression suicide prevention

Spirit Week, 9-12, Prevention

- A week to promote school unity among all student groups and grade levels.

Grade level meetings, 9-12, Prevention

- Place to discuss current school climate issues.

Hazing Pledge, 9-12, Prevention

- All students in clubs and activities are educated about hazing and pledge to not haze any students.

Short-Term Work with Individuals or Small Groups, 9-12, Intervention

- This work can be done around any topics based on the needs of the student population. (Social Skills, Bullying, Depression, Anxiety, Mental Health Referrals, Individual Consultation with Students and Parents)

Clubs and Activities

- Afterschool groups work to create friendship and a positive school environment through kindness and friendship. The following clubs are available for students to join: Volunteer Corp, Friends of Rachel, Best Buddies, Diversity, Gay/Straight Alliance

Academic and Non-Academic Activities

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.

Responses to Bullying

Teaching Appropriate Behavior through Skills-building

Upon the principal 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 principal 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 school 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.

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 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 principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

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

Collaboration with Families and Community

Norwell Public Schools strives to engage and collaborate with students' families and the community in preventing and responding to bullying.

To that end, Norwell Public Schools will provide information to parents and the community regarding the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, the Norwell School Committee Bullying and Cyberbullying policy including reporting procedures, and educational resources such as strategies for preventing bullying.

Parent Education and Resources

Norwell Public Schools will collaborate with the PTOs, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and similar organizations to develop educational programs for parents, guardians, and the community on the district's social health curricula including the anti-bullying components.

Norwell Public Schools will collaborate with the PTOs, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and similar organizations to develop additional programs that promote dialogue within families, between families and the school, and in the community on topics such as age-appropriate peer interactions, strategies to reduce bullying, legal implications of bullying behavior, and age-appropriate uses of technology for communication.

Notification Requirements

Each year Norwell Public Schools will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the intervention and prevention activities of the district by:

- publishing in student - parent handbooks the Norwell School Committee policies pertaining to:
 - Bullying and Cyberbullying which includes reporting, response, and investigation procedures
 - Harassment which includes reporting procedures
 - Safe Schools Memorandum of Understanding
 - Internet Acceptable Use
- communicating the social health curricula including the anti-bullying components at Open Houses, curriculum nights, or similar venues
- posting the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on the district website
- providing a list of educational resources in each school's guidance office and on the district website

Problem Resolution System

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: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent's office.

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:

Definitions

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

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.

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.

Relationship with Other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Norwell School Committee, 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, gender identity or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the Norwell 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 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, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

NORWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Student Services

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING REPORTING/COMPLAINT FORM

General Information

Complainant: _____

School/Assignment: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

School/Work Phone: _____

Date/s of Alleged Incident/s: _____

Information About the Incident

Name of the person/s you believe bullied/cyberbullied you or another person: _____

If the alleged bullying/cyberbullying was directed toward another person, please identify that person: _____

Please describe the incident/s as clearly as possible, including such things as what force, if any, was used, any verbal statement (e.g., threats, requests, reprimands, etc) and what, if any, physical contact was involved. Attach additional pages as necessary.

When and where did the incident occur? _____

List any witnesses who were present: _____

Complainant Statement:

This complaint is based upon my honest belief that _____ has bullied/cyberbullied or another person. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

(complainant signature)

(date)

Please submit this completed form, as well as any additional pages, to:

Suzan Theodorou
District Complaint Officer
Norwell Public Schools
322 Main Street
Norwell, MA 02061
781-659-8800
suzan.theodorou@norwellschools.org

Warren MaCallum
Alternate District Complaint Officer
Norwell Public Schools
322 Main Street
Norwell, MA 02061
781-659-8800
warren.maccallum@norwellschools.org

To Be Completed by Building Principal/District Complaint Officer Only:

Designated School Official who received complaint: _____ Date: _____

Date of Contact with Parent/Guardian: _____ Time of Contact: _____ Method: _____

Date of Notification with Norwell Police: _____ Time of Contact: _____ Method: _____

Please describe your initial actions relative to this report:

Signature of Designated School Official: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature of Building Principal: _____ **Date:** _____