

Anti-Bullying Policy

"Bullying," including "cyberbullying," means any severe or pervasive (repeated over time) physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically (i.e., cyberbullying), directed toward a student or students, that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following effects:

1. placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
2. causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
3. substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
4. substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, ostracism, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting, opposing or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation 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 system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. Cyberbullying also includes 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 effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the non-sectarian nonpublic school and is consistent with subsection (a-5) of this Section [free exercise of religion].

Nothing in this Section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

The school procedures for promptly reporting bullying, including, but not limited to, identifying and providing the school e-mail address and school telephone number for the staff person responsible for receiving such reports and a procedure for anonymous reporting; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The complaint manager is Anna Flanagan who can be reached at 847-541-8111 or by email at admin@bgmsweb.net.

If a student is determined to have engaged in bullying behavior, they will be subject to disciplinary actions appropriate to the offense, the student's age and past behavior, and the circumstances surrounding the events. Disciplinary actions may include a series of graduated consequences and, in severe cases, suspension or expulsion. Disciplinary actions will be thoughtfully taken in an attempt to promote student safety and well-being, change and improve behavior, and uphold the school's Mission, Philosophy, and Core Values.

Regarding rude, mean, or bullying behaviors exhibited outside of school and among our students, teachers and administrators may get involved if students' actions impact the school experience, be it academic or social, for individuals or the community. In such instances, school personnel will work thoughtfully with students and parents to determine the best course of action.

When a report is received, school personnel will collaborate with parents and students to agree upon a course of action and will work as quickly as is possible to ensure the safety of students, gather information, and clarify facts. School personnel will make all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date of the report and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying. Appropriate school personnel will be involved, as needed. Consistent with our policy on student privacy, school personnel will provide parents and students involved in the bullying incident with information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Head of School or other administrator to discuss the investigation, the findings, and the actions taken to address any bullying that is found to have occurred.

Interventions may be provided, as needed, to the parties involved in the bullying, including but not limited to restorative measures, counseling, and others.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is a violation of our policy and will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining interventions and consequences according to this Policy. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if our investigation concludes that no bullying occurred.

The bullying prevention and response plan is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians.

The bullying policy is posted on the school district's, charter school's, or non-public, non-sectarian elementary or secondary school's existing internet website and is included in the student handbook, and, where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted in the school, and is distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

The Head of School shall assist the Board with its evaluation and assessment of the policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, but is not limited to, factors such as:

1. The frequency of victimization.
2. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school.
3. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
4. The types of bullying being utilized.
5. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that our school already collects for other purposes. Policy revisions will be updated in the parent and staff handbooks and our website.

Revised and Approved by BGMS Board of Directors on 2/2/2022