



*We Are* **NM**

## **North Middlesex Regional School District Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan 2022-2023**

*The North Middlesex Regional School District does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in, its services, programs, and activities, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or age.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>VIII. DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>X. COLLABORATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>APPENDIX A - Translation Services Contact Information</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>APPENDIX B - List of Schools and Telephone Numbers</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>APPENDIX C - Summary for Handbooks</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>APPENDIX D - School Committee Policy</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Reporting Form for Filing an Allegation of Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination</b>	<b>25</b>

## I. LEADERSHIP

A. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, this Plan is being shared with stakeholders via meetings, publication, online posting, mailings, and public presentations, which includes teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians.

B. Assessing needs and resources:

With input from staff, school leaders assessed the adequacy of current programs; reviewed current policies and procedures; available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assessed available resources, including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. Based on these findings, schools are in the process of revising or developing policies and procedures; establishing partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement.

The district will carry out periodic needs assessments, including: 1) surveying students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues; and 2) collecting and analyzing building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying.

C. Planning and oversight:

School or district leaders identified below will be responsible for the following tasks:

Person(s) Responsible	Task
Superintendent	implementation and oversight of the Plan on a district-wide basis
Principal or designee	implementation and oversight of the Plan on a building level
Director of Human Resources	collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes
Superintendent's Advisory Council	creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors;
Assistant Superintendent	planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law
Guidance Counselors	planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors
Assistant Superintendent	choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use
School Committee, Superintendent	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
Superintendent, Principals	amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials, reviewing and updating the Plan each year

#### D. Priority Statement

The North Middlesex Regional School District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The North Middlesex Regional School District 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 understand that members of certain student groups, 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 one or more of these characteristics may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The North Middlesex Regional School District will take specific steps 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-sponsored/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 ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the North Middlesex Regional School 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. Each principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan in his/her building.

#### E. Reporting To DESE

The school or district will annually report bullying incident data to DESE.

## II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### A. Annual staff training on the Plan:

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include:

1. staff duties under the Plan
2. an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation
3. an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district
4. 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 and district-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

1. developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying
2. developmentally (or age) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
3. information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying
4. 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
5. information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying
6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying
7. ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), with a particular focus on the needs of students with a disability on the autism spectrum or students whose disability affects social skills development

Additional areas identified by the school for professional development include:

1. promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
2. fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference
3. building relationships and communicating with families
4. constructively managing classroom behaviors
5. using positive behavioral intervention strategies
6. applying constructive disciplinary practices
7. teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
8. engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making
9. maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students

C. Written notice to staff:

The North Middlesex Regional School District 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 district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

### **III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

A. Identifying resources:

Current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on early interventions and intensive services:

Staff
Building Administrators
Instructional Staff
Non-instructional staff
School Guidance Counselors
School Nurses
School Social Workers
School Psychologists
Speech and Language Pathologists (Social Skills with Special Education Students)

Early Childhood Intervention Program Coordinator
Programs/ Activities
Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) K-12 Evidence-Based Curriculum
Responsive Classroom
Character Counts
High School/ Middle School Required Physical Education and Health Courses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Health</li> <li>• Yoga : Mind and Body Connection</li> <li>• Competitive Team Sports</li> <li>• Comprehensive Health</li> </ul>
High School Social Studies Courses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contemporary</li> <li>• Introduction Into Sociology and Psychology</li> </ul>
High School Community Service Learning Program
Gay Straight Alliance
NM Community Outreach Program
North Middlesex Theatre
Best Buddies
Senior Side Kicks
Student Council (Upper Elementary, Middle and High School)
CLICK (Middle School Good Citizenship program)
"Mix It Up Day"
Social Skills Groups led by Guidance Counselors
Guidance Lunch Groups
Guidance Developmental Classroom Education
Freshman Orientation
Leaders International Club
Student Support Team (Child Study Groups)
Special Education PAC
Community Reading Days (Elementary)
Athletic Department Coaches Training (High School and Middle School)
Rachel's Challenge (Middle and High School)
Student Ambassadors
Caught Being Kind: School Wide Incentive Program
"Balance of Power" (Multi-media presentation promoting positive environments)

- B. Counseling and other services:
- C. Availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate resources outside the district. The district maintains a list of translation services and interpreter services for building administrators to access. ( see Appendix A)
- D. Linkages with community-based organizations: The district may refer students to Luk, Inc. and Herbert Lipton Center, as well as the Children's Medical Center at UMASS Memorial, for services related to counseling for being a target or aggressor of bullying,
1. In school staff and service providers:
  2. Social skills programs to prevent bullying:
  3. Classroom Teachers
  4. Guidance Counselors
  5. School Social Workers
  6. School Psychologists
  7. Speech and Language Pathologist
  8. b. Intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors:
  9. Guidance Counselors
  10. School Social Workers
  11. School Psychologists
  12. c. Behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula:

13. Guidance Counselors
14. School Social Workers
15. School Psychologists
16. Speech and Language Pathologists

E. 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.

F. Referral to outside services

Referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services is carried out by contacting the school social worker.

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

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches.

1. 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 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 cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference

2. Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan via class meetings, classroom instruction and via the student handbook in an age appropriate manner.

B. 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:

1. setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
2. creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students or student groups, 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 one or more of these characteristics

3. using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline
4. using positive behavioral supports
5. encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students
6. modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors
7. 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
8. using the Internet safely
9. supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

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

### **A. Reporting bullying or retaliation:**

1. 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 by the principal or designee.
2. A school staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.
3. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously; although no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.
4. The district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a dedicated mailing address, a list of telephone numbers and an email address (Appendix E)

### **B. Incident Reporting Form**

1. Use of a formal Incident Reporting Form (Appendix B) is not required as a condition of making a report. Anyone may make a report of a behavior or activity that is believed to be bullying, including cyberbullying or retaliation to the principal or designee
2. The principal or designee will evaluate whether or not it meets the definition of bullying, including cyberbullying or retaliation and make a formal report using the Incident Reporting Form if applicable
3. An Initial Referral Form for reporting behavior or an activity that is believed to be bullying including cyberbullying or retaliation can be used by staff, students, parents /guardians to report such behavior (appendix C)
4. The school or district will:
  - a. Include a copy of the Initial Referral Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians
  - b. Make the form available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee
  - c. Post it on the school's website
5. The Initial Referral Form will be made available in the most prevalent



language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

C. Written Notice of Policies For Reporting Acts of Bullying and Retaliation

1. At the beginning of each school year, the district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation

2. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school and district website, and information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians

3. Reporting:

a. Reporting by Staff

i. A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation.

ii. The requirement to report to the principal or designee 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.

iii. Staff may use the Initial Referral Form to report this conduct.

b. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

i. The 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 principal or designee.

ii. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

iii. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report.

iv. 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 principal or designee.

D. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

1. Safety

a) Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee 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.

b) Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to,

i. creating a personal safety plan

ii. pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus

iii. identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target

iv. altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target

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

a. The principal 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.

b. Student safety planning procedures will be implemented as per the school protocols.

## 2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of the event, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with federal and state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, 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 day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal 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 principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that the behavior is in violation of the law, the principal 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 principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that the behavior is in violation of the law. In making this determination, the principal will consult with local law enforcement agency, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate, consistent with the Plan and with applicable district policies and procedures.

## 3. Investigation

a. The principal 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.

b. During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary.

c. The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

4. Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate.

5. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process.

6. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

7. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

E. Determinations.

1. The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances.
2. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal 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.
3. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.
4. Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s), school counselor, and the target's or 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.
5. The principal 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.
6. 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 principal 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.
7. The bullying determination notice to the parents/guardians of the target must include information about the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's ("DESE") Problem Resolution System (PRS), and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through PRS, including PRS' contact information: Program Resolution System Office, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, Telephone: 781-338-3700; TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370.

F. Responses to Bullying.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law M.G.L. c. 71, § 370(d)(2)(v) requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include, but are limited to:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum
  - 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

a. 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 district's code of conduct.

b. Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are also governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in conjunction with state laws regarding student discipline.

c. 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.

## 3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

a. 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.

b. 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.

## **VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES**

### A. Parent education and resources.

1. The 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.

2. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

3. Parent presentations will be recorded and aired on the local cable community access channel, copied onto DVD, and posted on the website for parents to view.

4. Copies of the DVD and accompanying written material will be placed in each school library parent section and made available to local public libraries.

### B. Notification requirements.

1. Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used.

2. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety.

3. The school 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.

4. 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) primary among parents or guardians.

5. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

## **VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

A. Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

1. 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
2. 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, infringe on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

B. 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.

C. 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. DEFINITIONS**

**Aggressor or Perpetrator** is a student or 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, who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

**Bullying** is the repeated use by one or more students, or 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;
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school; or
- bullying as defined herein shall also include cyberbullying.

**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.

**Target or Victim** is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## **IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

A. 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, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. 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.

B. 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, 37H ½, or 37H ¾, 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.

C. The statutes and regulations infer that the administrators will have basic knowledge of the possible criminal statutes that may be in play in a case of bullying. Principals are encouraged to seek advice from local law enforcement officials if there is a question regarding an infraction of a law.

## **X. COLLABORATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT**

A. The North Middlesex Regional School District has a current Memorandum of Understanding with Ashby, Townsend, and Pepperell Police Departments, and the Middlesex County District Attorney.

B. The district will review and update the Memorandum of Understanding periodically.

## APPENDIX A

### TRANSLATION SERVICES CONTACT LIST

Chinese Translators/ psychologists  
Joy Chen Yu Lewis (Holden) (psychologist)  
508 829-7626 (home)  
508 579-9204 (cell)

Dr. Xin (*shing*)  
617 521-6782

Alice Li  
781 259-3410

DESE – Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement  
Nyal Francisco Fuentes **Now in the CCR dept**  
Tel. 781 338-3593  
Fax. 781 338-3318

Language School Int., Inc.  
179 Great Road  
Acton, MA  
Tel. 978 263-0328  
Fax 978 264-9552

Translation Center, University of Massachusetts at Amherst  
Offers translation and interpretation services in more than 60 languages. Many translators are full-time language teachers. Services also include web page translation, video voice-overs, multi-lingual word processing, and design. Site includes rates. Documents up to five pages can usually be returned within 48 hours. Documents up to twenty pages can be returned within five working days.  
[www.umass.edu/transcen/](http://www.umass.edu/transcen/)

Catholic Charitable Bureau of the Archdiocese of Boston, Inc.  
Provides interpreting services to state and private agencies. No translation services provided.  
270 Washington St.  
Somerville, MA 02143  
617 625-1920 ext. 204

Cambridge Translation Resources, Inc.  
A unit of Language for Industry, a provider of web-based services primarily for the business community.  
186 South St.  
Boston, MA 02111  
617 451-1233 <https://mbbnet.ahc.umn.edu/www/ctr.html>

Cross Cultural Communication Systems, Inc.  
Provides translation and interpreting services in more than 40 languages in the areas of health, education, legal, business and human services. Other services include language classes and consultation to promote cultural competency.

<https://embracingculture.com/>

P.O. Box 860  
Winchester, MA 01890  
781 729-3736

Latino Health Institute, Inc.

A major Latino public health organization, which provides translation of documents from, English to Spanish and vice versa. Has experience with health, social service, and education agencies.

95 Berkeley St.  
Boston, MA 02116  
617 350-6900  
[www.lhi.org](http://www.lhi.org)

Peritus Precision Translations, Inc.

Offers translation services in more than 30 languages using certified, native speakers who are selected for assignments based on direct experience within a subject area.

201 Center Hill Road, Suite A  
Plymouth, MA 02360  
508 224-8361     <https://www.peritusls.com/>

Multicultural Community Service of the Pioneer Valley

1000 Wilbraham Road  
Springfield, MA 01109  
413 782-2500

Somali Development Centre, Inc.

205 Green St.  
Jamaica Plain, MA 02180  
617 522-0700

MAPA Translations & Language School

Drita Protopapa, MA, MPH  
302 Union Ave, Ste. 100  
Framingham, MA 01702  
508 309-6309  
[www.mapatranslation.com](http://www.mapatranslation.com)  
[drita@mapatranslation.com](mailto:drita@mapatranslation.com)

Client Services Administrator Pacific Interpreters

Kristin Tryba  
520 SW Yamhill STE 320  
Portland, OR 97204  
503 445.5652 direct  
503 296.5626 fax



**APPENDIX B****LIST OF SCHOOLS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL</b>
Ashby Elementary School	911 Main Street, Ashby, MA 01431	978 386-7266	Ms. Anne Cromwell-Gapp
Hawthorne Brook Middle School	64 Brookline Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978 597-6914	Mr. Jason Webster
Nissitissit Middle School	33 Chace Avenue, Pepperell, MA 01463	978 433-0114	Ms. Lauren Young
North Middlesex Regional High School	19 Main Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978 597-8721	Mr. Tim McMahon
Spaulding Memorial School	1 Whitcomb Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978 597-0380	Ms. Kate Guziejka
Squannacook Early Childhood Center	66 Brookline Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978-597-3085	Ms. Anne Cromwell-Gapp
Varnum Brook Elementary School	10 Hollis Street, Pepperell, MA 01463	978 433-6722	Mr. David Hill
North Middlesex Regional School District	66 Brookline Street, Townsend, MA 01469	978-597-8713	Mr. Brad Morgan, Superintendent of Schools

## APPENDIX C

### SUMMARY FOR HANDBOOKS

#### **Anti-Bullying Law: *Reporting, Investigation, and Notification of Bullying or Retaliation and Confidentiality of Student Record Information***

##### I. **Purpose:**

Bullying and retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation about bullying, or who has reliable information about bullying, or against witnesses, is prohibited. North Middlesex Regional School District has a written plan Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and school committee policy to address the requirements of the Anti-bullying Law. It may be accessed electronically, on the district and school websites, by hard copy in each school, at Central Office and in the public library in the towns of Ashby, Townsend and Pepperell.

##### II. **Definitions and Terms:**

**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.

**Cyberbullying** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but 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. Cyberbullying shall also include: (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying 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 of posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

**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.

### **III. Reporting, Investigation and Notification**

#### **Staff**

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation.

The requirement to report to the principal or designee 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.

Staff may use the Initial Referral Form to report this conduct.

#### **Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others**

The 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 principal or designee.

Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Reports may be made orally or in writing. 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 principal or designee.

#### **Principal**

When receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, the principal or their designee will promptly respond to the incident and carry out an investigation.

#### **Parents**

The principal or designee will notify the parent of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator of a report of bullying or retaliation and of the school's procedures for investigating the report; and inform the parent of a victim of bullying or retaliation of actions that school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.

#### **Law Enforcement**

Upon reviewing the report of the investigation the principal will decide whether to notify the police of the reported incident. The decision to notify the police is based on a reasonable belief that the incident may result in criminal charges against the alleged perpetrator. If the principal decides to notify the police she/he will document the reasons and immediately make notification.

If the principal decides not to notify the police, or the police determine that its involvement is not necessary under the circumstances, the principal shall respond to the incident of bullying or retaliation with appropriate disciplinary action. If the principal subsequently determines facts that cause him or her to believe that the perpetrator's conduct may be criminal, the principal shall then notify the police.

In either case nothing in regulations shall prevent the principal from taking appropriate disciplinary or other action pursuant to school policy and state law related to the incident.

### **IV. Confidentiality of Records**

#### **Parents**

A principal may not disclose to a parent any student record information regarding an alleged victim or perpetrator who is a student and who is not the parent's child.

**Law Enforcement**

A principal may disclose a report of bullying or retaliation to police without the consent of a student or his/her parent. The principal shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of victims, student witnesses, and perpetrators to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

**Additional Authorities**

A principal may disclose student record information about a victim or perpetrator to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This provision is limited to instances in which the principal has determined there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals. It is limited to the period of emergency and does not allow for blanket disclosure of student record information. The principal must document the disclosures and the reasons that the principal determined that a health or safety emergency exists.

**V. Regulatory Authority:**

603 CMR 49.00 is promulgated by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010.  
Student Confidentiality Laws: 603 CMR 23.07(e) and 34 CFR 99.31(10) and 99.36

## **APPENDIX D**

### **North Middlesex Regional School District Regional School Committee Bullying Prevention Policy**

The North Middlesex Regional School District is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards and strictly prohibits the bullying of students in any form. 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.

Bullying is strictly prohibited:

- on school grounds;
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- at school-related 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 the North Middlesex Regional School District.

Bullying is also 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 the North Middlesex School District if the act or acts in question:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school;
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Definitions:

“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 also includes 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

“Aggressor or Perpetrator” is a student or 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, who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

“Target or Victim” is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

“Hostile environment” 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 the student’s education.

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

#### Bullying 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 includes 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 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 one or more of these characteristics and shall include the

specific steps that the school district shall take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention 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 or paraprofessionals. The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan within the school.

### Reporting:

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 building equity coordinator who will promptly notify the building principal. Parents/guardians, students, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

### Investigation Procedures

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying although 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 or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

The school principal or principal's designees shall promptly investigate the report of bullying which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged aggressor, staff members, students and/or witnesses. Appropriate strategies will be implemented to protect the safety and privacy of the target and witnesses during the investigation. The Principal shall also promptly assess an alleged target's needs for protection and, if appropriate, shall develop and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student. The Principal shall also make a preliminary determination as to the need for referral to law enforcement authorities. The investigation shall be completed within fifteen (15) school days from the date of the report.

If the school principal or principal's designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall promptly notify the parents or guardians of the student who has been the target and/or aggressor, of bullying consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. Additionally, the school principal or equity coordinator shall take appropriate corrective and disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal shall consult with the school's liaison to the police department and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

Disciplinary actions for students or staff members who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy

and a file shall be maintained by the principal.

Retaliation:

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be strictly prohibited. Retaliation in any form will result in disciplinary action including suspension from school.

Target Assistance/Aggressor Assistance:

The North Middlesex Regional School District Regional School District shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, families and staff members, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment:

Ongoing training shall be provided for teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, and administrators 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 K 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 including the duties of faculty and staff 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.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be posted on the North Middlesex Regional School District Regional School District's website.

REFERENCES: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c.71, §370; 603 CMR 49.00





**REPORTING AN INCIDENT THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED  
BULLYING, HARASSMENT or DISCRIMINATION**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

*All reports must be sent directly to building administration (Principal and/or Assistant Principal) in order to be investigated.*

**REPORTER INFORMATION**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Last Name**

**First Name**

ANONYMOUS

*Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.*

**I am the:**

**My Role is:**

- Target/Victim of the behavior
- Witness (and not the target)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- Student
- Staff Member
- Administrator
- Parent / Caretaker Family Member
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**My Best Contact Information is:**

(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address

If student, state your school: \_\_\_\_\_

If staff member, state your school or worksite: \_\_\_\_\_

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE ALLEGED INCIDENT/BEHAVIOR**

### **Date(s) of the Incident(s) or Behaviors:**

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ or PRESENT

Month / Day / Year

Month / Day / Year

*If specific date information is not known, please describe time frame (e.g. before around Halloween - Thanksgiving Break, etc.):*

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### **Time(s) of the Incident(s)/ Behaviors:**

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*If specific time(s) is not known, please describe time frame (e.g. before school, after school, lunch, etc.):*

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### **Location(s) of the Incident(s) or Behaviors:**

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**Target(s)/Victim(s):** *Who was the student that may have been impacted, harmed or injured?*

Last Name	First Name	Grade/School

**Alleged Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s):** *An aggressor is a student or member of a school staff who acts or behaves in a manner that may violate the Student Handbook, Employee Handbook, School or District policies or procedures, and/or local, state or federal mandates, regulations or law.*

Last Name	First Name	Student	Staff	School

**Witness(es)/Bystander(s):** *List people who saw the incident(s) and/or people you believe may have helpful information about what is reported to have happened.*

Last Name	First Name	Student	Staff	Other



## SIGNATURE OF PERSON FILING THIS REPORT

*You are certifying under the penalty of perjury that the information provided herein is true and complete to the best of your knowledge.  
NOTE: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

**RECEIVED BY (Initials):** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

### NOTIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF REPORT (as applicable):

Parent/Guardian of Target(s)/Victim(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian of Target(s)/Victim(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian of Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian of Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s): NMRSD STAFF (Initials): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Law Enforcement: NMRSD STAFF (Initials): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION:

Finding of Bullying or Retaliation:

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

### ACTION TAKEN:

\_\_\_\_\_ Warning \_\_\_\_\_ In-School Counseling \_\_\_\_\_ Safety/Behavior Plan

\_\_\_\_\_ Detention \_\_\_\_\_ Community Service \_\_\_\_\_ Suspension

**FOLLOW-UP:**

Target(s)/Victim(s)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial & Date Upon Completion:

\_\_\_\_\_

Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial & Date Upon Completion:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature & Title:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_