

**NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2019-2021**

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan



Norton School Committee

Mrs. Kathleen Stern ~ Chairperson
Mrs. Carolyn Gallagher ~ Vice Chairperson
Mrs. Sheri Cohen
Mr. Deniz Savas
Mr. Daniel Sheedy

Norton Public Schools Administration

Dr. Joseph F. Baeta ~ Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Jennifer O' Neill ~ Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
Mrs. Jeanne M. Sullivan ~ Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Vincent Cerce, Director of Guidance and SEL
Mrs. Karen Winsper ~ Director of Instructional Technology
Mr. Ethan Dolleman ~ Principal, Norton High School
Ms. Amy Benner ~ Assistant Principal, Norton High School
Mr. Vincent Hayward ~ Principal, Norton Middle School
Mr. Ron Goldstein ~ Assistant Principal, Norton Middle School
Mr. Martin Geoghegan ~ Principal, H. A. Yelle Elementary School
Mrs. Riitta Bolton ~ Principal, J.C. Solmonese Elementary School
Mrs. Ann Marie Baker ~ Assistant Principal/Early Childhood Coordinator,
J. C. Solmonese Elementary School
Mrs. Catherine Luke ~ Principal, L.G. Nourse Elementary School

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	LEADERSHIP.....	3
II.	TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	6
III.	ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES.....	7
IV.	ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES.....	8
V.	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION.....	9
VI.	COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES.....	16
VII.	PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION.....	17
VIII.	PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM.....	17
IX.	DEFINITIONS.....	17
X.	RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS.....	18
APPENDIX A:	Bullying / Cyberbullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form	
APPENDIX B:	Norton Public Schools Bullying / Harassment / Intimidation Flowchart	
APPENDIX C:	Norton Public Schools Bullying / Harassment / Intimidation Target / Victim Followup Procedures Flowchart	
APPENDIX D:	Norton Public Schools Bullying / Harassment / Intimidation Aggressor Followup Procedures Flowchart	
APPENDIX E:	Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Interview / Investigation Form	
APPENDIX F:	Therapeutic Resource List	

INTRODUCTION

Bullying of a student is prohibited as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, §37O. Retaliation is also prohibited.

Bullying is prohibited 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. Bullying 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, shall be prohibited if the bullying:

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

This plan has been revised per the M.G.L. c. 71, §37O revisions of April, 2014 which states that each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall develop, adhere to and update a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention. This plan outlines definitions of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation; statements prohibiting such behavior and the Norton Public School's procedures for reporting, investigating and disciplinary actions pertaining to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation. The plan also requires procedures for collecting, maintaining and reporting required data pertaining to bullying incidents. The plan will be reviewed and updated biennially.

All of this is in an effort to aid the Norton Public Schools in creating and maintaining a positive school climate and a safe and respectful school environment, resulting in behaviors that prevent bullying behaviors before they ever happen.

I. LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels will play a critical role in developing and implementing Norton's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan") in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. Leadership includes district and school administrators, counselors, psychologists and Team Chairpersons. Leadership is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. It is also the responsibility of leaders to involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing and implementing the Norton's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

- A. Public involvement in developing the Plan. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Norton Plan was developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. After working groups and task forces have created a draft Plan, Norton's Plan will be posted to school websites for review. A public forum will be advertised then held to allow for comment by all constituencies.

School Committee approval of the Plan will be sought only after such comment period.

- B. Assessing needs and resources. Norton's Plan will serve as the Norton Public School system's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, will continually assess the adequacy of current programs; review current policies and procedures; review available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. This process will assist the Norton Public Schools in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, district policies and procedures will be revised or developed; partnerships with community agencies developed, including but not limited to the Norton Crisis Center, Bristol County District Attorney MA Aggression Reduction Center (MARC), Bully Guard and law enforcement (see Appendix C for additional partnerships); and priorities set.

Initial and annual spring needs assessments will be administered that: 1) survey students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues; and 2) collect and analyze building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and "hot spots" in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses). The information will be gathered through *SWIS* and will help to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services. The district will utilize surveys from *Panorama Education* each Fall & Spring, which will monitor overall climate and student-specific SEL in order to ensure that the needs of all students are being met.

- C. Planning and oversight. Staff members' responsibilities are as follows:
- Receiving reports on bullying ~ All adult staff members, Principals
 - Collecting and analyzing building and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes ~ Building Principals, Director of Pupil Services, Director of Guidance and Social Emotional Learning.
 - Creating a uniform process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors ~ Superintendent
 - Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law ~ Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, Director of Pupil Services, Director of Guidance and Social Emotional Learning
 - Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors ~ Director of Guidance and Social Emotional Learning, Counselors, Psychologists, Team Chairs
 - Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use ~ Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, Director of Guidance and Social Emotional Learning, Director of Pupil Services, wellness teachers, counselors, psychologists, Team Chairs, Site Councils
 - 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, Director of Pupil Personnel, Principals,

- Site Councils, School Committee
- Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; ~ Superintendent, Principals
- Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials ~ Director of Pupil Services, Principals, counselors, Team Chairs, psychologists, SEPAC
- Reviewing and updating the Plan biennially or more frequently with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, Director of Pupil Services, Director of Guidance and Social Emotional Learning, Principals, staff.

D. Developing priority statements. Priority statements communicate individual school's and the district's vision in creating and implementing its bullying prevention and intervention strategies. Our core values include:

- The school and district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for individual differences (ex. race, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, etc...).
- The school and 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 the Norton Public Schools' comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.
- We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, housing status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school or district will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.
- We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including utilizing State curricula, *Second Step ~ A Violence Prevention Curriculum*, Bully Guard Program, other instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities (like "Little Wiffles"), and parent or guardian involvement.
- The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school and 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 Building Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Norton Public Schools Plan reflects the requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O to provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals. The Plan should state the content and frequency of staff training and ongoing professional development as determined by the school's or district's needs. The Plan will delineate between professional development offerings that will be provided district-wide and which will be school-based. The locally identified additional areas of training should be based on needs and concerns identified by school and district leadership and are listed below.

The law lists six topics that must be included in professional development.

- A. Annual staff training on the Plan. Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will be carried out in September of each year and stress staff responsibilities and 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. Each school's *School Safety & Discipline Report* will be analyzed for individual school professional development needs; physical assaults, verbal/physical bullying, etc.
- B. Ongoing professional development. The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. The NPS' professional development will include developmentally appropriate strategies for bullying prevention and intervention, research findings on bullying, and information on cyberbullying and Internet safety. The district will utilize, in addition to other resources, DESE's no-cost resource. Professional development enhances 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:
 - (i) developmentally or age-appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
 - (ii) developmentally or age-appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
 - (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
 - (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students

- who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional areas identified by individual schools from both bus and school reports and informed by surveys, for which professional development will be provided, will include:

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

- C. Written notice to staff. The school or district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school or district Employee Handbook and the Code of Conduct.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. This Plan describes the strategies for providing supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the school's and district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, available services reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors. The Norton Public School Plan includes a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets, and family members of those students. These locally established strategies are reflected here.

- A. Identifying resources. The school and district's process for identifying their capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families, is via the use of annual survey results administered to students, staff, and parents/guardians. Based on these results as well as requirements from DESE, teams of staff including school counselors, nurses and wellness teachers are implementing Signs of Suicide Screening with students at the MS and HS. PBIS was implemented at the elementary level in the Spring of 2018 and will be implemented at the middle school in the Fall of 2019. Several teachers at each building were trained in Trauma Sensitive Schools during the 18-19 school year. School Counselors and Wellness teachers are implementing classroom

lessons developed around the topics of social skills, relationships, bullying, emotions, etc. We will continue to make connections with community agencies that can provide services, via referrals, scheduling speakers/assemblies and establishing programs, will be on-going. Intensive services will include guidance counseling, adjustment counseling, outside referral for health services, in-district psychological sessions, and structured resource program enrollment. IEP's will be adjusted to be proactive in dealing with bullying, retaliation, etc.

- B. Counseling and other services. Appendix E identifies offerings of culturally and linguistically appropriate resources within/without the school and district. Appendix E also identifies linkages with community based organizations, including Community Service Agencies (CSA's) for Medicaid eligible students. Team Chairs, counselors, and psychologists will assist schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, providing social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors; including but not limited to behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.
- C. 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. The IEP Team **must** consider and specifically address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. (See M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010.)
- D. Referral to outside services. The schools and District will utilize a clear referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services. Clear protocols will help students and families access appropriate and timely services. Referrals must comply with relevant laws and policies. Current local referral protocols should be evaluated to assess their relevance to the Plan, and revised as needed.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The law requires each school or district to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's or district's curricula. Curricula must be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development.

- A. Specific bullying prevention approaches. Bullying prevention curricula is informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:
 - using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
 - holding a school-wide "One School, One Book" event;
 - 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;

- building social skills, per IEP;
- emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

Wellness classes will teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Wellness teachers will remind students that aggressors, targets, and witnesses are prohibited from retaliating and will result in disciplinary action. The NPS health curriculum addresses all issues related to bullying.

The Plan will be reviewed annually with secondary students during health classes. At the elementary level, students' homeroom teachers will review the Plan with students in manners consistent with their grade level.

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:

- 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.

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

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, the Norton Public Schools has put in place policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur. The Norton Public Schools has outlined below procedures for staff reporting of incidents, processes for communicating to students and families how reports can be made (including anonymous reports), and procedures to be followed by the Principal or designee once a report is made.

- A. Reporting bullying or retaliation. Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district 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. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form,¹ located strategically within each school building, on each school and district website, a dedicated mailing address (“Pupil Personnel Office” 64 West Main Street, Norton, MA 02766), and email addresses of the building Principals.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. Each school in the district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school’s main office, the counseling office, the school nurse’s office, bus office, cafeteria and other locations determined by the Principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school’s website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the 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. 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 or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the Principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. If staff members who witness or become aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation do not report immediately to the Principal or designee, the matter will be investigated and they will be disciplined according to Article X of the Norton Teacher Association Contract. 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.

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

The Norton Public Schools 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. 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

¹ See Appendix A for Sample Incident Reporting Form.

age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the Principal or designee.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

1. Safety

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. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The Principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

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. Norton Public Schools safety policies can be found in Appendix L. Aggressors may be sent for 45-day safety assessments. Targets may be assigned an adult to shadow him/her during the school day for a temporary period of time to ensure safety.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents or guardians. Within 24 hours of beginning an investigation into a report of alleged bullying, harassment or retaliation, the Principal or designee will notify the parent/guardian of both the alleged victim and aggressor that a report has been filed and what the next steps in the investigation process are.

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 this, and of the procedures for responding to it. The Principal shall inform the target’s parents of actions that school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. A Principal's notification to a parent about an incident or a report of bullying or retaliation must comply with confidentiality requirements 603 CMR 49.00 also address confidentiality of student record information related to notification of bullying and retaliation. There may be circumstances in which the Principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation, per 603 CMR 49.00

- b. Notice to Another School or District. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the 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 criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Principal will notify the local law enforcement agency, via its School Resource Officer, without the consent of a student or his/her parent. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and agreement with the Norton Police Department. The Principal shall document the reasons for his or her decision to notify law enforcement. Nothing in 603 CMR 49.06 shall be interpreted to require reporting to a law enforcement agency in situations in which bullying and retaliation can be handled appropriately within the school district or school. 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 criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

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

A Principal may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor, *during and after*, an investigation 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 as provided in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(e) and 34 CFR 99.31(a)(10) and 99.36. 603 CMR 49.07(3) 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. The Principal will exercise great care in discussing statements made during the course of the investigation, such as statements made by the aggressor to the alleged target and comments relating to sexual orientation or sexual behaviors.

- C. Investigation. The Principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the Principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

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. 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. The Principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation, which is consistent across the district. A uniform spreadsheet to log incidences has been created to accomplish this.

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

D. Determinations. The Principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. 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. 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.

Depending upon the circumstances, the Principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or 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.

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. 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.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

E. Responses to Bullying. *This section of the Plan lists the school's or district's chosen strategies for building students' skills, and other individualized interventions that the schools or district may take in response to remediate or prevent further bullying and retaliation.*

1. 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 with psychologists or counselors, based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
 - Providing lessons from *Second Step ~ A Violence Prevention program and Steps to Respect*
 - Direct Counseling and Wellness lessons focused on building relationships, social skills, bullying, etc...
 - offering leadership opportunities for students;
- 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 prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the 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 schools' and 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.

3. 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.

F. Responding to a Report of Bullying by School Staff

Schools and districts need to develop policies and procedures that address how school or district administration will respond to and resolve a report of bullying of a student by school staff. School staff is defined as including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals. The policies and procedures must address safety planning, notification to parents or guardians and others, investigation, and response – areas that are addressed when a student is alleged to have bullied another student (see Section V. B – E above). Schools and districts should consider consulting with local counsel in developing and administering these policies and procedures. They should emphasize the importance of the investigation, the need for the aggressor, target, and witnesses to be truthful, and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

The District takes any allegations of bullying seriously and has developed a process for investigating these claims.

Reporting

Staff members, students, parents or guardians or others who witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation involving a student by a staff member will report it to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or the assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor.

Responding

Before and during the investigation of allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents, as well as for students who report, witness, or provide information about the report of bullying by a staff member.

Investigation

Upon receipt of a viable report, the principal or designee will contact the parents or guardians of the alleged target. The principal or designee will promptly investigate by interviewing students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians and others as necessary. The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Determination

The principal or designee will determine if bullying or retaliation of a student by a staff member is substantiated and will determine what remedial action, responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target if bullying or retaliation is found and what action is being taken to prevent further acts. All notice to parents must comply with applicable

state and federal privacy laws and regulations. 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 criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the Norton Police Department.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

As required, the Norton Public Schools has included provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the district and schools including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and Cyberbullying. Parents and guardians must also be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents or guardians.

Appendix E identifies parent resource and information networks that the school or the NPS will collaborate with in working with parents and guardians.

- A. Parent education and resources. The Norton Public Schools will offer education programs for parents and guardians, bi-annually that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

Parents will be apprised of signs of bullying; exhibiting low esteem, avoidance of certain people or places, change in behavior (withdrawn or passive, aggressive or self-destructive), crying, anxiety, etc.

Parent education will focus on what parents can do if their child is being bullied; gather more information, monitor activities and relationships with others, monitor electronic communications, talk to the school, do not bring aggressor and target together reach out to law enforcement or others if needed.

Education for parents will also include what to do if your child is the aggressor (bully); talk about these behaviors openly, reinforce that bullying behaviors are unacceptable, set clear rules for behavior, enforce these rules firmly, use praise for compliance with these rules and consequences for noncompliance, lead by example.

If parents think their child is being bullied, they should watch for warning signs, such as change in personality, change in or loss of friends, drop in grades, secretive, isolated.

Parents will be apprised of the 3 R's: Rules, parents and educators must demonstrate they are in charge and won't tolerate bullying; Rights, every student has the right to learn in a safe environment; Responsibilities, educators must be responsible for supervision. Students must be responsible for respecting the rights of their classmates and themselves. (Beane, A.

L. (1999). *The bully free classroom.*)

Studies show that many children determine whether bullying is acceptable from what is allowed in the home. In fact, many studies indicate that parents and society hold primary responsibility, as social norms instilled in children's earliest years frame later behaviors. The burden of solving the bullying problem cannot rest on the schools alone.

- B. Notification requirements. Each year the Norton Public Schools will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used in each of the schools. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including Cyberbullying and online safety. The district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet Safety Policy via School Handbooks. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in School Handbooks and on individual school websites, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The district will also post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include Cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the Norton Public Schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM:

Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v): The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department's problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. This information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats:

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/>, 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.

IX. DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

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

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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

School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

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

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Norton Public Schools, 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 Norton 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 school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the Norton Public Schools to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H½, 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.

M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O

APPENDIX F. Therapeutic Resources

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS THERAPEUTIC RESOURCE GUIDE/PARTNERSHIPS

Adult and Child Counseling Assoc.

966A Park St., Stoughton
781-341-0923

Arbor Counseling Services

38 Pond St., Franklin
508-528-6037

Arbor Fuller Hospital

200 May Street
Attleboro, MA 02703
508-761-8500

Community Visiting Nurses (Bereavement Support Groups)

10 Emory Street
Attleboro, MA 02703
508-222-0118

Bellingham Counseling Assoc.

15 Main St., Bellingham
508-966-4002

Dr. Ellen Berlinsky of Psychological Associates

Taunton and Raynham offices
125 High Street
Taunton, MA
Accepts Mass Health
508-823-0304

Boston Neuropsychological Services

LLC 687 Highland Ave., Unit 2
Needham, MA 02494
Phone: 781-559-8444

Steven Casolaro (psychologist)

470 Washington Street
Norwood, MA
781-762-4401

Catholic Social Services

Pine Street
Attleboro, MA 02703

Center for Community Counseling and Education

32 Common St.
Walpole, MA 02081
508-668-3223

Child & Family Psychological Services (Neuropsychological evaluations /Counseling)

Dr. Craig Malcolm

Jeremy Devlin, Ph.D. (Social Skills Group)

89 Access Road, Unit 24
Norwood, Ma 02062
(781) 551-0999(ext. 204, for our use only)
<http://www.cfpsych.org>

Children's Advocacy Center

Bristol County
58 Arch Street
Fall River, MA 02724
508-674-6111

Children's Hospital Boston

300 Longwood Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
Phone: 617-355-6398 Fax: 617-730-0319
www.childrenshospital.org

Community Care Services

200 S. Main Street
Attleboro, MA 02703
508-226-6031

Community Counseling of Bristol County

Mill River Professional Center
One Washington Street
Taunton, MA 02780
Phone: 508-828-9116

Crisis Intervention Team

508-285-9400 (crisis hotline)
800-660-4300 (toll free crisis)
Taunton/Attleboro/Norton Emergency Services
108 W. Main Street Building # 2
Norton, MA 02766

Department of Children and Families

Child-At-Risk Hotline
1-800-792-5200
Taunton/Attleboro Area Office
Mill River Place

1 Washington St.
Taunton, MA 02780
(508) 821-7000
fax (508) 822-1453
fax (508) 559-7695

Department of Mental Health

(508) 977-3150
Fax (508) 977-3752
Taunton/Attleboro Site Office
P.O. Box 4007
Taunton, MA 02780

The Figman Psychiatric Group (for medication referral)

Robert Figman, MD
675 Paramount Drive Suite 305
Raynham Woods Medical Center
Raynham, MA
508-977-9980

Kerzner Associates, Psychological Services (Individual/ Family Counseling)

30 Mechanic Street
Foxboro, MA 02035
508-543-2133

Dr. Andrew Margolin (Counseling/ Socialization Groups for children with Asperger's)

132 Central Street
Foxborough, MA 02035
(508)698-9100

Mass CARE- www.mass.gov/eohhs/rlocator

A resource locator for health and human services

Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC)

Maxwell Library, Room 201
Bridgewater State College
Bridgewater, MA 02325
Phone: 508-531-1784
E-mail: marc@bridgew.edu
Web site: www.MARCcenter.org
Contact: Elizabeth K. Englander
Suggested websites from the MARC brochure
www.safeyouth.org
www.kidshealth.org
www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov
www.familyinternet.about.com
www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org

May Counseling Center

95 West St. Walpole
508-668-4592

Neponset Valley Counseling Center

32 Baker St.
Foxborough, MA 02135
508-543-8888

Neuropsychology & Education Services for Children and Adults

55 Chapel Street #202
Newton, MA 02458
617-658-9800

The NeuroDevelopment Center (neuropsychological evaluations)

260 West Exchange Street, Suite 210
Providence, RI 02903
Phone: 401-351-7779 Fax: 401-351-8188
www.neurodevelopmentcenter.com

New Hope (Services for battered Women and their Families)

247 Maple Street
Attleboro, MA 02703
508-226-4015

Norfolk Counseling Services

34 School St. #104
Foxboro, MA 02035
508-543-3411

Northeast Health Services

30 Taunton Green #5
Taunton, MA 02780
508-880-6666 888-880-6644

Parents Under Stress (24/7)

800-632-8188

Child & Family Psychological Service of Norwood

89 Access Rd. #24
Norwood, MA 02062
781-551-0999

Carol Rako, LICSW

28 S. Main St.
Sharon, MA 02067
781-784-7733

Randall Robinson (psychologist),
925 Main St.
Walpole, MA 02081
508-668-5254

Debbie Sirota
44 Wood Ave.
Mansfield, MA 02048
No Mass Health, takes most managed care programs
508-339-2856

Dr. Richard Solomon (Neuropsychological evaluations, counseling)
Delta Associates
321 Hope Street
Providence, RI 02906
401-421-1405

South Bay Mental Health Services

Attleboro Clinic
607 Pleasant Street
Attleboro, MA 02703
(508) 223-4691

Brockton Clinic
103 Commercial St.
Brockton, MA 02301
(508) 521-1020

St. Mary's
Atten: Melissa Santoro
For children of Sexual Abuse
401-353-3900 X416

Tufts Floating Hospital
800 Washington Street, Box #531,
Boston, MA 02111
Phone: 617-636-9528 Fax: 617-636-8173
www.floatinghospital.org

Vorpahl Psychology Assoc.
266 Main St.
Medfield 508-242-9666

Wellness Therapy, Brunnie Getchell
51 Mill St., Suite 8
Hanover, MA 02339
gbrunnie@gmail.com

Maryellen Williams, LICSW

50 Oliver Street Suite W1-A
North Easton, MA 02356
(508) 230-1732

Websites for further information:

www.apa.org American Psychological Association
www.aacap.org American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
www.counseling.org American Counseling Association
<http://massgrouptherapy.com/>

Your Insurance Company's website

Pediatricians, family physicians, and insurance companies can generally provide referrals.

****This is simply a list of area resources and not endorsements by the Norton Public Schools****