



# Collegiate Academies

## School Bullying Policy

Collegiate Academies believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. We take seriously our obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among students, staff, and volunteers. Behavior that infringes on the safety or well-being of any student will not be tolerated. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to direct physical contact, verbal assaults, the use of electronic methods, and social isolation and/or manipulation.

### Definition, Behaviors Constituting Bullying, and the Effect on Others:

"Bullying" means:

1. A pattern of any one or more of the following behaviors:
  - a. Gestures, including but not limited to obscene gestures and making faces.
  - b. Written, electronic, or verbal communications, including but not limited to calling names, threatening harm, taunting, malicious teasing, or spreading untrue rumors. Electronic communication includes but is not limited to a communication or image transmitted by email, instant message, text message, blog, online meeting platform, or social networking website through the use of a telephone, mobile phone, pager, computer, tablet or other electronic device.
  - c. Physical acts, including but not limited to hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, choking, damaging personal property, or unauthorized use of personal property.
  - d. Repeatedly and purposefully shunning or excluding from activities.
2. Where the pattern of behavior:
  - a. is exhibited toward a student, more than once, by another student or group of students; and
  - b. occurs, or is received by, a student while on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related function or activity, including via online learning platforms or during any online learning sessions, in any school bus or van, at any designated school bus stop, and/or in any other school or private vehicle used to transport students to and from schools or any school-sponsored activity or event.

The pattern of behavior as described above must:

1. have the effect of physically harming a student, placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm, damaging a student's property, placing the student in reasonable fear of damage to the student's property, or
2. be sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough to (a) create an intimidating or threatening educational environment, (b) have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's performance in school, and/or (c) have the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

### Reporting an Act of Bullying, including Cyberbullying - Procedure for students and parents:

1. Report bullying incidents to the principal/designee and/or other school administrator. Students and parents can find the Bullying Report Forms at their school's front office or under the "Resources" page of the CA website at [www.collegiateacademies.org](http://www.collegiateacademies.org).
2. If you wish to make a report of bullying orally or through other means, notify a school administrator and they will assist with completing and submitting the form to the principal/designee on your behalf.
3. Once the principal/designee receives the reporting form, a prompt investigation of the incident will be completed in accordance with state laws and CA policy (see "Investigating an Act of Bullying" below).

The principal/designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of the bullying policy. All school employees and parents chaperoning or supervising school-sponsored functions and events are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee. A verbal report must be reported on the same day as the employee or parents witnessed or otherwise learned of the incident and a written report must be filed no later than two days thereafter.

The victim of bullying, anyone who witnessed the bullying, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may file a report as described above.

### **Retaliation and False Reports**

Retaliation against any person who reports bullying in good faith, who is thought to have reported bullying, who files a complaint, or who otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning an allegation of bullying is prohibited conduct and is subject to disciplinary measures. Intentionally making false reports about bullying to school officials is prohibited and will result in appropriate



disciplinary measures.

## **Investigating an Act of Bullying/Cyberbullying**

- Upon receiving the written bullying report form, the principal/designee will initiate an investigation the next business day during which school is in session. The investigation will be completed no later than ten school days after the date the written report was submitted.
- The investigation will include an interview of the reporter, victim, the alleged bully, and any witnesses, and include obtaining copies or photographs of any audio-visual evidence, if available.
- The principal/designee will notify the parent or legal guardian of a student under the age of eighteen of the allegation of bullying before the student can be interviewed and inform them of the right to attend the interview with the student. If, after three attempts, the parents or legal guardians of a student cannot be reached or do not respond, the student may be interviewed.
- Documented interviews of the victim, alleged offender, and witnesses must be conducted privately, separately, and confidentially. At no time will the alleged offender and victim be interviewed together.
- The investigator will collect and evaluate the facts using the form developed by the LDE.
- The principal/designee may (in accordance with Act 861 of 2012) file a complaint with the court of juvenile jurisdiction pursuant to Children's Code Article 730(8) and 731(1), or Children's Code Article 730(1), if the parent or legal guardian refuses to attend a conference or meeting regarding the student's behavior.

The highest level of confidentiality possible must be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying/cyberbullying and the investigative procedures that follow.

## **Meetings with Parent or Legal Guardian of the Victim and Alleged Offender**

Meetings with the parents or legal guardians of the victim and meetings with the parents or legal guardians of the alleged offender must be separate.

## **Notification to Parents/Legal Guardians of an Act of Bullying**

The principal/designee will promptly notify the parents/legal guardians of all students involved of any incident of bullying as defined by this policy, but no later than the end of the day on which an investigation of the incident(s) has been initiated.

For the purposes of parental notification, "students involved" does not include students who were mere bystanders/non-participating witnesses to the conduct or incident. All notifications must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

## **Resolution of Investigation/Disciplinary and Criminal Consequences of Bullying**

The principal/designee shall compose a written document containing the findings of the bullying investigation, including input from the students' parents/legal guardians, and the decision of the school or school system official. The document will be placed in the record of both students. The principal/designee shall promptly notify the complainant of the finding of the investigation and the remedial action taken, if the release of the information does not violate the law.

## **Remedial and Disciplinary Action:**

Any student who engages in confirmed bullying/cyberbullying will be subject to prompt and appropriate disciplinary action, pursuant to LA R.S. 17:416.13, up to and including expulsion. In addition, if the school official determines that a student has violated the Code of Conduct in committing individual acts or incidents of bullying/cyberbullying behavior described above, the school shall take appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to the following:

- Loss of a privilege
- Reassignment of seats in the classroom, cafeteria or school bus
- Reassignment of classes
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Bus Suspension
- Referral to the Student Hearing Office for a Disciplinary Conference
- Out-of-school suspension



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The results of the investigation will determine the level of infraction for the bullying/cyber bullying incident(s).

**Criminal Consequences:**

School officials may also report criminal conduct to law enforcement, if appropriate.

**Procedure for Appeal in Cases of Bullying Failure to Act**

A student, parent/legal guardian, or school employee may report a bullying incident to the network Superintendent/designee if a school official does not take timely and effective action to address the incident. The Superintendent/designee will begin an investigation of any complaint of bullying that is properly reported the next business day in which school is in session.

If the Superintendent/designee does not take timely and effective action, the student, parent, or other school employee may report the bullying incident to the Louisiana Department of Education.