Webster Public Schools
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Webster Public Schools District (henceforth referred to as "The District") is to maintain a safe and secure school environment conducive to teaching and learning. This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in response to M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 (as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010), prohibiting bullying in schools.

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying. The intention of this plan is to strengthen existing protections for our students. Additionally, it serves as a tool for our faculty and administration to promote strategies that will allow our District to prevent issues of violence, bullying and other acts of aggression.

The District is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies and our community to prevent issues of violence. All members of the school community have a responsibility to support and promote these objectives. The District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner, respecting individual differences.

The District does not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in school buildings, on school buses, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. The District investigates all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and takes prompt action to end that behavior. The District supports this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

The policy applies to all members of the school community including, but not limited to: students, teaching and non-teaching staff, parent/guardians and visitors to district buildings..

PRIORITY STATEMENT

The Webster Public Schools community is a safe and secure environment which provides for the education of the whole student, including healthy habits of the mind and body.
Therefore, the District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. Toward that end, we do not

tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in school buildings, on school buses, on school grounds, or in school-related activities.

The District is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. We promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. We take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

I. LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in developing and implementing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan") in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote a positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in ensuring all employees teach students to be civil to one another and promote pro-social behaviors. All staff are responsible for setting pro-social priorities and for staying current with up to date research and practices on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. District Administrators and Principals, utilizing established council and advisory mechanisms, will involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing, implementing and evaluating the Plan.

A. Public involvement in developing the Plan

This Webster Bullying and Prevention Plan has been developed by a cross section of educators from the Webster Public Schools. The planning team included district-level administrators, principals, counselors, and teachers, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians. The Webster Bullying and Prevention Plan used the Model Bullying and Prevention Plan developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as a template.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the original Webster Bullying and Prevention Plan approved by the School Committee in 2010, after being open for public comment, November 10, 2010 through December 3, 2010.

This plan was then amended on September 10, 2013 to extend protections to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, who are defined to include, but are not limited to "educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, and athletic coach or advisory to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional."

In 2020, the Anti-Bullying Task Force, comprised of staff, counselors, administrators, updated this plan. This revised plan was open for public comment, February 11, 2020 through March 1st, 2020. It was shared with English Language Parent Advisory Council, the Webster Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and all School Councils. During the public comment periods, copies of the Plan were available in the main office

of each school, the superintendent's office, and on the district's website. This plan and policy was then approved by the School Committee on _____.

B. Assessing needs and resources

The Webster Public Schools assesses needs and resources as part of an ongoing assessment of data in the context of analyzing resources, strengths, and gaps in the following manner:

- As a Turnaround District, each school has had several Turnaround Site and Monitoring Site visits and reviews through American Institute of Research. These site visits include surveys of staff to assess school culture and learning environments.
- Student incident data is analyzed at each school and reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- Social-emotional curriculum/ Advisory group/ WIN block data
- District Safety meetings
- Students at Risk meetings / Roundtable meetings / Child Study meetings

This ongoing process assists schools in the district in identifying needs. Based on these findings, action steps may include revising or developing protocols and procedures; expanding community partnerships including law enforcement; and setting priorities for future prevention and intervention efforts. This ongoing process helps to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and informs decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.

Additionally, at least once every four years beginning with 2020-2021 school year, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Similar tools to the student survey can be used with faculty, staff, parents/guardians to assist in determining school climate needs.

C. Planning and oversight

The following identifies those responsible for tasks required under the Plan:

- Any school personnel who receives a report of alleged bullying contacts a counselor and/or school administrator the same day the report is received and a prompt investigation ensues.

- Administrators, Teachers, and Support Teams collect and analyze school-wide data on bullying to assess the current climate and to create action plans for improvement.

- District Leadership Team, School Administrators, in conjunction with the Professional Development Committee, plan ongoing professional development required by law.

- School Administrators, Counselors and Staff utilize the approved forms from this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for recording, tracking, and accessing information related to targets and aggressors.

- School Administrators will submit monthly bullying incidents to the Superintendent and the Superintendent will provide updates to the School Committee.

- The District and all schools make this Plan and informational materials available in order to advise parents/guardians on proper reporting procedures.

- School Committee and the District Administrative Leadership Team annually review and amend student handbooks and codes of conduct to include the Plan and provisions under Massachusetts General Law.

- The Anti-Bullying Task Force considers input from students, parents/guardians, faculty, administrators, law enforcement and the community to make recommendations to the School Committee for revisions of current policies and protocols under the Plan.

- The School Committee supports and approves all revised policies.

- Superintendent and the District Leadership Team reviews and ensures implementation of the anti-bullying curricula.

- School Administrators, School Psychologists, Counselors, and all Staff implement the supports to respond to the needs of targets, aggressors and by-standers.

- Director of Technology, in conjunction with the District Leadership Team, develops protocols and procedures for computer and Internet safety.

D. Developing Safe School Climates

The district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil and respectful manner, and respect individual differences. The 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 in a safe school environment.

While we promote an environment to celebrate diversity, we are cognizant that some students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying based on actual or perceived characteristics; including, but not limited to: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status, academic standing, physical appearance, language, and/or mental, physical and developmental disabilities. All school personnel will be responsible for monitoring and creating safe school climates and all school personnel will take specific steps to create safe and supportive learning environments that prevent bullying.

II. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF TRAINING

Training for faculty and staff will be included in the Mandated Training offered by the District at the onset of the school year. Staff members hired after the onset of the school year will complete Bullying Prevention and Intervention Training along with all Mandated Training for the Webster Public Schools as part of their orientation to the District.

A. Annual staff training on the Plan

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff responsibilities 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.

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

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

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

Additional areas for professional development may 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
- 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 responsibilities, 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, bystanders, families, and others are addressed. A continuum of services is available to enhance the district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying. Available services should reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of those involved.

A. Identifying resources

The District conducts a review of current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on early interventions and intensive services. After the initial mapping of resources is complete, the District develops recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps. This may include adopting new curricula, reorganizing staff, establishing safety planning teams, and identifying other agencies that can provide services. The mapping of resources is conducted by members of the counseling and administrative teams. Recommendations based on mapping of resources and identification of needs are made to the Anti-Bullying Task Force.

B. Counseling and other services

The District continues its practice of connecting students and families with community service agencies as appropriate. The site-based student support team, the building principal, the school psychologist and any other appropriate staff member is responsible. The counseling team, with input from school administration, develops safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, provides social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offers education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. Possible interventions include but are not limited to behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.

C. Students with disabilities

As required by MGL c. 71B, §3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when a student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of his/her disability, the IEP Team considers what should be included in the student's IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. This includes determining whether specific accommodations, specially designed instruction, or related services are necessary in order to meet the needs of the child.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The District provides age appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade in the school district's curricula. Curricula is evidence-based. Effective instruction includes classroom approaches, whole school initiatives and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development.

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches:

Bullying prevention curricula for the Webster Public Schools will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- Using scripts and role playing 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.

B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts.

The Webster Public Schools promotes teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts. The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment and they 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 students with disabilities, of all race, color, homelessness, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic background, national origin, religion, economic status, and disability in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws

- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students may require disciplinary action

- 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
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

C. Curriculum development

The Webster Public School counseling team, building principals, curriculum coordinators, district administrators, and Anti-Bullying Task Force review and support the implementation of appropriate curriculum in the following ways:

- Review existing appropriate evidence-based curriculum and methods of delivery of Bullying Prevention

- Review new materials and make recommendations for adoption of appropriate curriculum

- Support the development of lessons, referring to the stated objectives and guidelines, for consistent use at each level

D. Curriculum implementation

The Webster Public Schools implements approved evidenced-based curricula. **See Appendix A**

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 district has established policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur.

It is an expectation of the District that all staff members are required to report any bullying or harassment incident they see or learn about. The district promptly and reasonably investigates all allegations of harassment, including bullying. The principal or designee at each building are responsible for handling all complaints alleging harassment or bullying.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying, is prohibited. Gateway Behaviors such as teasing, name calling, taunting, exclusion, spreading of rumors or gossip including, but not limited to, online behaviors, staring, making faces, mimicking, rough housing and physical altercations will not be tolerated.

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 are recorded in writing.

Extend protections are given to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, who are defined to include, but are not limited to "educator, administrator, school nurse,

cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, and athletic coach or advisory to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional

A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee, when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor; or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor; or to the superintendent or designee, when a member of the school committee is the alleged aggressor.

Any instance of bullying or retaliation must be reported. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. A report may be made using the anonymous reporting system by going to www.web ter-schools.org, or by sending an email to bullying@webster-schools.org. Anonymous reports may also be made by calling the Bullying Prevention Hotline at 508.943.0104 x40001.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district:

- Makes the Plan and reporting forms available on the website www.webster-schools.org
- Provides the Plan and reporting forms in the most prevalent language(s) or language of origin of students, parents/guardians, upon request.
- At the beginning of each school year, the school or district provides the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation.

a. **Reporting by Staff**

A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee, when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor; or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor; or to the superintendent or designee, when a member of the school committee is the alleged aggressor. Any instance of bullying or retaliation must be reported. The requirement to report as provided 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.

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

The school or 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, or superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor. 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 age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation

a. **Safety**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee takes 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 are 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
- altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target
- contacting parents/guardians

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.

b. **Obligations to Notify Others**

- ***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 student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to the situation. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

- ***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.

- ***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. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. 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 student 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.

c. **Investigation**

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.

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 will remind the alleged student 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.

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.

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 will consult with legal counsel about the investigation. (Align this with school or district procedures.)

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:

- determine what remedial action is required, if any
- 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 student 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**

Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building. Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d) (v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying 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 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
- making a referral for evaluation

Taking Disciplinary Action. If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

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

Consequences for confirmed bullying will include referrals, interventions, and /or disciplinary actions as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct, School Committee policies and any collective bargaining agreements.

If a student has been found in violation of the bullying policy, the District will impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action to end and prevent further occurrences of the action(s). The District will take into account harm suffered by the target(s) as well as any damage to school or District property. The nature of the action taken must comply with District and school disciplinary policies. Any disciplinary of corrective action shall conform to the due process requirements of federal and state law. Action concerning students may include a written warning; classroom transfer; suspension (short- or long-term); exclusion from school-sponsored functions; after-school programs and/or extra-curricular activities; limited or denied access to parts or areas of the building; exclusion, expulsion, referral to law enforcement authorities; adult supervision on school premises; parent conferences; awareness training; empathy development awareness programs; counseling or any other action authorized by and consistent with the Student Code of conduct and/or school disciplinary code. The District complies with federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to the discipline of students with disabilities.

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

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others. The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

f. **Responding to a Report of Bullying by School Staff**

All incidents of bullying by school staff will be thoroughly investigated. As appropriate, disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school employee may include, but is not limited to, a written warning, suspension, transfer, demotion, removal from certain duties, employment, termination, supervision, training, and counseling.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

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

Notification requirements. Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school or 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. 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) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

The Webster Public Schools pledges to prepare all students to be life-long learners and responsible citizens. The Webster Public Schools are committed to maintaining a safe school environment free of bullying, in accordance with the current School Committee Policy.

Bullying of students by other students, student to teacher, teacher to student, parent to teacher, teacher to parent, administrator to teacher, teacher to administrator any district employee against another district employee will not be tolerated by the Webster Public Schools.

The District has implemented strategies for protecting a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying or has reliable information about an act of bullying. Such strategies include but are not limited to:

- The development of a safety plan
- Check-in with counselors, administration or other staff
- Staff escorts
- Modified schedule/class assignment

- Increased supervision in high traffic areas
- Increased communication among staff

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- 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
- 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 district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. Problem Resolution System

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

IX. DEFINITIONS

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

Bullying is "The repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written,verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear or harm to himself or of damage to his 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. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyberbullying."

Cyberbullying is "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. 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 or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v) inclusive of the definition of bullying."

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. 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.

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. 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.

Target is a student or member of the school staff against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the WPS, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Nothing in the Plan prevents the 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.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or the District to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

Appendix A:

Forms

__BHS __WMS __PAE

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INITIAL INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:**

_____ *This line may be left blank if an anonymous report is being made*

(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.)

2. **Check whether you are the:**

□ **Alleged Target of the behavior** □ **Reporter (not the target)**

3. **Check whether you are a:**

□ **Student** □ **Staff member** □ **Parent** □ **Other (specify)** _____

4. **Your email/telephone number:**_____

5. **Information about the Incident:**

Name of Alleged Target (of behavior):_____

Name of Alleged Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred:_____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible):_____

_____

6. **Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ □ Student □ Staff □ Other _____

Name: _____ □ Student □ Staff □ Other _____

Name: _____ □ Student □ Staff □ Other _____

7. **Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.**

Staff member receiving this Report: _____ **Date:** _____

BULLYING REPORT INITIAL INVESTIGATION

Alleged target: _____ **Alleged Aggressor:**_____

1. **Investigator(s):**_____ **Position(s):**_____
2. **Interviews:**

□ **Interviewed alleged aggressor** **Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

□ **Interviewed alleged target** **Name:**_____ **Date:**_____

□ **Interviewed witnesses** **Name:** _____ **Date:**_____

3. **Any prior documented Incidents by the alleged aggressor?**

□ **Yes** □ **No**

If yes, have incidents involved alleged target or target group previously? □ **Yes** □ **No**

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION □ **Yes** □ **No**

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

Form Given to: _____ **Position:** _____ **Date:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date Received** _____

CONCLUSIONS FROM INITIAL BULLYING REPORT INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:

□ YES **□ NO**

If yes:
□ Bullying
□ Retaliation

If no:
□ Incident documented as_____
□ Discipline referral only_____

2. Contacts:

□ Alleged Target's parent/guardian **Date:_____**
□ Alleged Aggressor's parent/guardian **Date: _____**
□ Administration **Date: _____**
□ Law Enforcement **Date: _____**

3. Action Taken:

_____

4. Describe Safety Planning:

_____

_____

Follow-up with Alleged Target:
scheduled for _____ **Initial and date when completed: _____**
Follow-up with Alleged Aggressor:

scheduled for _____ **Initial and date when completed: _____**
Report forwarded to Principal: **Date_____**

Report forwarded to Superintendent:
(If principal was not the investigator) **Date_____**

Investigation completed by:_____ Title:_____
Investigator Signature: _____ **Date: _____**

For Administrative Use Only

Administrator receiving this Report: _____ Date: _____

Webster Public Schools
Internal Investigation Reporting Form

Bullying and/or Harassment/Discrimination

Part I: Background Information

Section I: Reporter Information

***Report made via Civil Rights/Bullying Reporting Form? <u>ATTACH AND PROCEED TO PG.2</u>**
****If report received via other means, complete this Reporting page:**

Date of Report	

School	

Name of Person Taking Report:	

Name of Reporter (or Anonymous)		**Relationship to target**	

Section II: Initial Report

Name of Target		**Grade**	

Name of Aggressor(s)/ Perpetrator(s):		**Grade**	

Potential Witnesses:

Name	Role (Student, Staff, Parent, etc.)

Date & Time of Incident(s):	

Location of Incident(s):	

Description of Incident:

Describe the details of the incident *AS INITIALLY REPORTED* to the school (including names of the people involved, what occurred and what each person did and said, including specific words used)

Special Considerations:

Was the reported bullying, harassment or discrimination based on the target's membership in a protected class (race/color, religion/creed, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, age, disability, veterans status, citizenship)? (Yes/No)	
If yes, specify:	
If yes, develop Interim Measures and make Civil Rights Considerations (see below)	

Is there reasonable suspicion that a crime occurred? (Yes/No)			
Was the school resource officer notified? (Yes/No)			
Reported to:		**On (Date):**	

Were any other law enforcement personnel notified? (Yes/No)			
Reported to:		**On (Date):**	

Is there reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect? (Yes/No)			
Was DCF notified? (Yes/No)			
Reported to:		**On (Date):**	
Specify relevant details:			

Support Plan (Bullying)/Interim Measures (Civil Rights):

Was a Support Plan/Interim Measures put into place? (Yes/No)	
If yes, specify:	
Were any Aggressors/Perpetrators removed from school or work on an emergency basis or placed on leave? (Yes/No)	
If yes, specify:	

Signature of person taking report: _____

Date : _____

Part II: Investigation Report

Section I: Summary of Investigation

Name of Investigator(s):		**Title(s)**

Interviews: ***(copy and paste blank interview sections as needed)***

Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, the Target of the alleged behavior should be interviewed first followed by any witnesses and finally the aggressor(s).

Make sure to notify ALL participants in the investigation of the District policy prohibiting retaliation.

Name	**Participant Role (Target/Aggressor/Perpetrator/Witness)**	**Date of Interview**
Summary of Interview (*use additional sheet if necessary*):		

Name	**Participant Role (Target/Aggressor/Perpetrator/Witness)**	**Date of Interview**

Summary of Interview (*use additional sheet if necessary*):		

Describe any evidence that was examined during the investigation process including documents, video footage, text messages, social media, screenshots, etc. Take steps to preserve evidence as necessary.

Has the Aggressor/Perpetrator had prior documented incidents of a similar nature? (Y/N/NA)	
If yes, have incidents involved Target or Target Group? (Y/N/NA)	
Any previous incidents with findings of harassment, bullying or, retaliation? (Y/N/NA)	

Civil Rights Considerations – Investigation of School Culture/Climate

Summary of Investigation (*use additional sheet if necessary)*:	

Section II: Conclusions

Findings	
Is there sufficient evidence to support a finding that there was a violation of the District's policies on: (place an 'X' in the appropriate boxes if there is a finding)	
Bullying	
Civil Rights Based Harassment/Discrimination	
Hazing	
Describe any additional violations of the Code of Conduct found during the investigation below	

Civil Rights Considerations	
Was the student targeted due to actual or <u>perceived differentiating</u> characteristics, such as 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? (Y/N)	

If 'YES' above, please describe below
If 'Yes' above, describe ways in which the climate and culture of the school was considered to have contributed to the incident?

Section III: Follow-Up

Notification of Findings:

	Notify Target of Findings (verbal and written)
	Notify Aggressor(s)/Perpetrator(s) of Findings (verbal and written)

Action(s) Taken: (Mark any actions taken as a result of this incident)

	Individual Education
	Individual Training
	Community Service
	Loss of Privileges
	Detention
	Suspension
	Other (describe):

Other responsive measures:

Is additional staff or student education/training necessary? (Yes/No)	
If so, describe:	

Follow-Up Contacts/Monitoring: ***(add rows as needed)***

Name	**Role (Target/Aggressor/Witness/ Parent or Guardian)**	**Date of Follow-up**	**Method (Phone/Email/ Letter)**

	Central Office		
	Law Enforcement		
	Special Education		

Safety & Support Planning

If finding of Bullying or Harassment/Discrimination, a Safety Plan <u>must</u> be developed for the Target(s) of the behavior. If there is no finding, a Support Plan <u>may</u> be developed for any persons involved in the investigation as appropriate.

Plan Developed for Target(s) (Safety/Support or N/A)		**Follow-up Date:**	
Plan Developed for Witnesses? (Safety/Support or N/A)		**Follow-up Date:**	

Date Report Forwarded to Principal		**Principal Initials**	
Date Report Forwarded to Central Office		**Central Office Initials**	

/nvestigator Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B
Anti-Bullying Curriculum

School	**Program**	**Grades**
PAE	Second Step	PK-4
	Second Step Anti-Bullying Units	K-4
WMS	Second Step	5-8
BHS	Second Step	9-12

APPENDIX C

Additional curriculum support activities

The District supports programs and activities that promote the value of a positive school climate with healthy and respectful behaviors. Although some of these programs and activities are not evidence-based or specifically targeted to bullying prevention, they will continue to be evaluated for potential implementation.

1. PBIS - Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions - All Buildings/District-Wide: Teaches expectations of all students to promote a safe learning environment and positive culture.

2. Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)

3. Diversity Club - BHS

4. Morning Meeting - PAE

5. Responsive Classroom - PAE

6. Advisory BHS and WMS

7. Service learning projects

First Reading: May 12, 2020
Second Reading: June 9, 2020
Third Reading and Final Approval: June 30, 2020