Wellesley Public Schools

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BULLYING POLICY, PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

The Wellesley Public Schools policy prohibits bullying as defined by M.G.L., c.71, § 37O

I.DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to work as collaboratively and as efficaciously as possible, to prevent and intervene on all acts of bullying, it is essential for school personnel, students, parents or guardians, law enforcement agencies, and other interested parties to use common language. The following definitions are provided to facilitate this goal.

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff, including, but not limited to educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, support staff, and teacher assistants/paraprofessionals who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students 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.

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature, generated with or without the assistance of artificial intelligence and transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, or photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyber-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 so as 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.

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, teacher assistants, or paraprofessionals.

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

II.LEADERSHIP

On or before December 31, 2010, the Wellesley Public Schools will submit the Wellesley Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and post it on the Wellesley Public Schools website. The Plan will be reviewed and updated at least biennially, as mandated by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O sec. 5(d).

A. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, sec. 5 (d) the Plan will be developed in consultation with various constituencies. This involvement will include:

Wellesley Public Schools administration, staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, students, parents and guardians, local law enforcement agencies, and community representatives. This process will be conducted biennially.

Consultation will include, at a minimum, notice and a public comment period prior to adoption.

B. Assessing Needs and Resources

The **Superintendent**, with input from families and staff, will assess the adequacy of current programs. This may include the following:

- Review of current policies and procedures;
- Review of available data on bullying and behavioral incidents;
- Assessment of available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services;
- Reading of current and relevant articles and research on best methodology to prevent and intervene to address bullying and cyber-bullying;
- Research and review of 'field-tested' and research-based anti-bullying curricula and instructional guides;
- Development of a resource bank of relevant materials for both parents and students;
- Review of the MA comprehensive Health and Wellness Curriculum Frameworks to provide a working curriculum context for anti-bullying curriculum;
- Each year the district will collect, analyze, and present trend and aggregated data to district and school-based personnel for the purposes of refining current practices and systems of reporting.
- Assessments of initial and periodic needs (at least every 4 years), by surveying students regarding school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying, and by surveying staff, parents, and guardians on school safety issues. The survey results will be used to assess the effectiveness of bullying prevention curricula and instruction that is required under the bullying prevention and intervention statute

C. Planning and Oversight

The building **Principals** will be responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

1. Receiving reports on bullying, and/or initiating a bullying investigation based upon a pattern of behavior being observed.
2. Collecting and analyzing building and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes;

3. Collaborating on, and following our process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors;
4. Implementing the district plan for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law;
5. Identifying and recommending supports that will respond to the needs of targets and aggressors;
6. Implementing the curricula that each school will use;
7. Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct to, among other things, make clear that bullying of students by school staff or other students will not be tolerated; and
8. Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials.
9. Informing the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the target of bullying about the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the Department of Elementary and Second Education's problem resolution system (PRS) (included in the closeout letter to parent(s) or guardians(s)

The Director of Technology will be responsible for updating the Internet Safety Use Policy.

The Superintendent will be responsible for reviewing and updating the Plan biennially, or more frequently.

D. Priority Statement

The Wellesley Public Schools expect that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The Wellesley Public Schools are committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

The Wellesley Public Schools community understands that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The WPS will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The Wellesley Public Schools will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore a target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying. The Wellesley Public Schools are committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of bullying and violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The Wellesley Public Schools **Principals** are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan at their respective buildings except when a reported bullying incident involves the Principal or the Assistant Principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the **Superintendent** or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing

the safety of the alleged victim. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the **School Committee**, or its designee, shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

III.TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Wellesley Public Schools will meet the requirements under M.G.L. c.71, S 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.

A. Annual Staff Training on the Plan

Annual training for all WPS staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the building **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. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

B. Ongoing Professional Development

The **Director of Curriculum and Instruction** will be responsible for oversight of choosing and implementation of the curricula each school will use. 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. 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 professional development will be informed by research and will include:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally 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 cyber-bullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying

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 the school for professional development 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;
- Managing classroom behaviors constructively;
- 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 safe and caring classrooms for all students. and
- Engaging all staff and those responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors designed to correct misconduct, instill accountability in the school setting, etc, and bullying behaviors.

C. Written Notice to Staff

The Wellesley Public Schools will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by school staff, in the school employee handbook and the code of conduct.

IV.ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying Resources

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, students aggressors, families, and others are addressed. Resources for targets, aggressors, and their families may include, but are not limited to: adopting new curricula, reorganizing staff, establishing safety planning teams, and identifying other agencies that can provide services.

The Wellesley Public Schools **Administration** will be responsible for finalizing a bibliography of anti-bullying resources that may include, but are not limited to: the WPS Bullying Policy, curriculum and instructional guides and materials; WPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan; adopted related curricula, relevant articles for professional, student, and parent use; data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying and behavioral issues; parent and student brochures; curriculum and books that help foster a sense of positive and pro-active school community and culture; relevant and useful web-sites; and linkages with community based organizations, including Community Service Agencies (CSA) for Medicaid eligible students. These will include resources that provide related services to student aggressors or targets and their families.

The Wellesley Public Schools **Director of Curriculum and Instruction** will conduct a search for materials that are research based or field-tested, age appropriate, well designed and user-friendly. The Program Administrator (Assistant Superintendent of Student Services) or designee will draw resources from a variety of venues such as: the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, field expert recommendations, colleagues both within WPS and other districts, parents, students, Law Enforcement, MA Attorney General and the Norfolk District Attorney, and the Internet.

Resources will be evaluated by factors such as: the documented success rate; developmental appropriateness; resource design structure in keeping with the WPS core values and pedagogical theory; cultural and linguistic match with the WPS student and parent population; creative presentation of high interest to the population such that it encourages student engagement to find solutions and use critical thinking skills.

B. Counseling and Other Services

The District has staff and service providers available to all students and their families, who may 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, WPS will consider a variety of tools including, but not limited to: behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula. The District provides for counseling supports and other services for targets, student aggressors, and their families.

C. Students with Disabilities

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when an IEP Team determines a 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 the student's 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.

D. Students with Protected Status

Wellesley Public Schools recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.

E. Referral to Outside Services

The Wellesley Public Schools have established a referral protocol for families to access appropriate and timely services. Referrals will comply with relevant laws and policies. Current local referral protocols will be evaluated to assess their relevance to the Plan, and revised as needed.

V. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The law requires each school district to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into school curricula. Curricula will 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 will be informed by current research that, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- Using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, 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; and
- Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The WPS staff will review the Plan with students by October 1st of each school year.

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 the WPS bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;

- Empowering students to take action by knowing what they do when they witness other students or school staff engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- 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.

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

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. Staff members will report immediately to the building **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 any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals, may be made anonymously. The WPS will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, a Bullying Incident Report Form.

Use of a Bullying Incident Report Form is not required as a condition of making a report. WPS will:

1. Include a copy of the Bullying Incident Report Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
2. Make it available in the main office of each school, the counseling office, and other locations determined by the building **Principals**; and
3. Post it on the WPS website. The Bullying Incident Report 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 **Superintendent** will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, staff, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, teacher assistants, paraprofessionals, 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 WPS Program Administrator or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks and that information is made available to parents or guardians.

1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the building **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 when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. 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 collaborative policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

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

The Wellesley Public Schools expect 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 building **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 building **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 – Allegations of Bullying by a Student

1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the building **Principal** or designee will take steps to assess the needs of all students involved including the alleged target and alleged aggressor, and 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 a transportation vehicle; 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 building **Principal** or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The building **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.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

At any point after receiving a report of bullying having allegedly taken place, or in the course of their typical duties, a **Principal** or designee may need to speak with faculty, staff, or students who may have witnessed some part or all of a behavioral incident being investigated. Similarly, a **Principal** or designee may need to speak with faculty, staff, or students as part of the after-action sharing to support individuals involved.

a. Notice to Parents or Guardians

Upon learning that bullying or retaliation may have occurred, the building principal or designee will, in most cases, provide notice to the parents or guardians of the alleged target and the alleged aggressor that an investigation into the allegation(s) will take place, depending upon the age of the student(s) and circumstances of the incident(s).

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, building **Principal** or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this finding, and of the procedures for responding to it. Notice will be consistent with state regulations, 603 CMR 49.00.

A **Principal** may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent or guardian unless the information is about the parent's own child or the guardian's ward, in compliance with state and federal privacy laws.

b. Notice to Another School or District

If a 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 building **Principal** or designee who was informed first 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 building **Principal** or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the building **Principal** or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student, who is no longer enrolled in school, the building **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. This communication may be done without the consent of a student or his or her parent.

In making this determination, the building **Principal** will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable WPS policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, and the **Superintendent** or designee.

C. Investigation

The building **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 building **Principal** or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The WPS Program Administrator or designee will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

The building **Principal** or designee, in consultation with a school counselor, as appropriate, may conduct interviews. To the extent practical, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the building **Principa**l or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The building **Principal** or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation, including the preservation of all email and text communications.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with the Wellesley Public Schools policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the building Principal will, with the consent of the **Superintendent**, consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

D. Determinations

The building **Principal** or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after an investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the building **Principa**l 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 building **Principa**l or designee will:

1. Determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
2. Determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action are necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the building **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 building **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 building **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.

E. Responses to Bullying

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills Building

Upon the building **Principal** or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he/she will 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 building **Principal** or designee may consider include:

- Offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- Making a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the building **Principal** or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the building **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,the code of conduct for the school, and state student discipline law, and may include actions such as a parent meeting and skills coaching, to mediation or conflict resolution, to detention or suspension.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, which will be considered in conjunction with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the building **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 building **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 building **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 building **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 building **Principa**l or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

VII. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

A. Parent education and resources

The Wellesley Public Schools in collaboration with the **Parent Associations and Wellesley Youth Commission** offers 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 each school.

B. Notification requirements

Each year the building **Principal** will notify parents and guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber-bullying and online safety and how parents and guardians can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school district or school Plan WPS will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school'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 district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VIII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, 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 the school district; 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 the Wellesley Public Schools, 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 Wellesley Public Schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

IX.RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and Federal laws, and the policies of the Wellesley 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, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the Wellesley 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 Wellesley Public Schools policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the schools to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H1/2, other applicable laws in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

X. PROBLEM RESOLUTION

Any parent/guardian 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/prs, 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.

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