BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

Effective June 2026-June 2028

Malden Public Schools | 110 Pleasant St, Malden, MA 02148 | 781.397.6100 | Maldenps.org

Introduction

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan("Plan") addresses the prevention of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, as required under M.G.L. c.71, § 37O, added to Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 entitled *An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools* as signed by the Governor in May 2010. In addition to the following current efforts, the administration, faculty, and staff of the Malden Public Schools commit to improve, enhance, and update both the plan and its implementation annually in order to best serve the students, parents, and the citizens of Malden.

Priority Statement

The Malden Public Schools expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences. We are committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school or district will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation, and take prompt actions to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement. The Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent bullying, cyberbully and retaliation. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The building principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan 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 target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and taking all other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

I. Leadership

Schools, as well as district leadership at all levels, will play a critical role in the ongoing development, implementation, and evaluation of the plan in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate in the Malden Public Schools. School leaders and others have the responsibility to model and teach students to be civil to one another and promote understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. School leaders also play a critical role in setting priorities and for currency with the research on ways to prevent and respond to incidents and behaviors that may lead to bullying.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Plan has been developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Consultation with the school community will include notice and a public comment period before the Plan is adopted by the school committee or equivalent authority.

At least once every four years beginning with the 2015/16 school year, the district will administer a student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school or district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department. In addition to the student survey, district leadership will administer a survey to faculty, staff, and parents/guardians to assist in determining school climate needs.

During the development of the original plan, district leaders, school leaders, and educators collaboratively discuss instruction and curriculum on bullying prevention and intervention.

II. Training and Professional Development

The Malden Public Schools' Plan includes annual training prior to the start of the academic year for all school staff including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals and will include:

- Staff duties under the Plan;
- An overview of the steps that the Principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation;

- An overview of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention curricula to be offered at all grades in the Malden Public Schools; and
- All new hires will be required to take the Faculty and Staff Training on Bullying Prevention and Intervention.

There will also be ongoing professional development in order to:

- Establish a climate and common understanding of the tools necessary to promote safety, civil communication, and respect for differences; and
- Build the skills of staff on preventing, identifying, and responding to incidents that may lead to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c.71, §37O, the content will be informed by research and will include information on developmentally and/or age appropriate strategies to prevent bullying, such as the following:
    - Developmentally and/or age appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
    - Information regarding the complex interactions and power
    - Differentials that can take place between 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;
    - Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying; and
    - 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 whose disabilities affect social skill development.Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development include, but are not limited to:
- Promoting and modeling use of respectful language;
- Fostering understanding and respect for diversity and difference;
- Building collaborative relationships and opportunities for ongoing communication with families;
- Constructive classroom management;
- Developing staff use of positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- Developing staff use of constructive disciplinary practices;
- Targeting development of social skills and fostering emotional well-being among students (e.g. 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; and
- Engaging 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.

III. Access to Resources and Services

Identifying Resources:

The Malden Public Schools is staffed to be able to identify and provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families aiming to support the creation of positive school environments / climates by focusing on the appropriate interventions and services. Identified resources include:

- Principals
- Assistant Principals
- School Attendance Officer
- School Counselors
- Licensed Social Workers/Adjustment Counselors
- School Nurses
- School Psychologists
- After school activities and programs
- Extended Day Programs
- Restorative Practices

Counseling and Other Services:

- Clinical Health Care Agencies
- Cambridge Health Alliance
- Malden Police Department
- School Resource Officers
- Department of Children and Families

How to access aforementioned resources, counseling and other services.

For access and/or referral to the following resources please contact the respective building principal, guidance or adjustment counselors, licensed social workers, school psychologist, school nurse, school attendance and consulting psychiatrist. Refer below for a list of building principals across the district. Please refer to the directory page of our website for the most up to date list https://www.maldenps.org/district-information/directory.

Principals

School	Name	Email	Phone
Beebe	Kari-ann Murphy	kmurphy@maldenps.org	(781) 388-0622
Early Learning Center	Alex Rock	arock@maldenps.org	(781) 397-7025

Ferryway	Matthew Stahl	mstahl@maldenps.org	(781) 388-0659
Forestdale	Adam Weldai	aweldai@maldenps.org	(781) 397-7326
Linden	Rafael Garcia	rgarcia@maldenps.org	(781) 397-7329
Malden High School	Michael Sabin	msabin@maldenps.org	(781) 397-6000
Salemwood	Van Huynh	vhuynh@maldenps.org	K-4: (781) 388-0643 / 5-8: (781) 388-0647

For physical and health educators: please contact Director of Athletics/Physical Education and Health Mr. Charles Conefrey.
Email: cconefrey@maldenps.org

Students with Disabilities:
As required by M.G.L. c. 71B § 3, amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines that a student has a disability that affects social skills development or that a student is susceptible to becoming an aggressor or target of bullying, harassment, or retaliation because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or retaliation.

IV: Academic and Non-Academic Activities

Introduction:

In choosing appropriate programs for the students of the Malden Public Schools the following questions were taken into account:

- Does the program address bullying and cyberbullying prevention?
- Is it age-appropriate?
- Has it been evaluated through research?
- Is there a parent-education component?

In 2025, Malden Public Schools adopted the HealthSmart curriculum for use in grades K-12. HealthSmart is a comprehensive health program, rated by DESE, which provides age-appropriate instruction on bullying intervention and prevention. Some examples of the relevant topics covered are, stress management, self-esteem, bullying/cyberbullying, and healthy relationships

Grade	Curriculum	Who Delivers	Who Monitors
K-12	HealthSmart	Health Teachers	Building leaders, district leaders, and directors of Health and Guidance

In addition the Malden Public Schools will adhere to the following guidelines and approaches from the DESE:

A. <u>Specific bullying prevention approaches:</u>

The bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- Using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- Emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; 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.

B. <u>General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts</u>: The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for
- students with disabilities, LGBTQ/non-gender conforming students, and homeless students;Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement;
- Using positive behavioral supports;
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors; Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- Using the internet safely; and

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

V. Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

Bullying (including cyber-bullying and harassment) are major distractions from learning and can adversely impact students' educational success and advancement. Bullying can lead to chronic absenteeism, truancy, or even dropping out of school. Further, bystanders may feel both guilty and helpless for not taking steps to address bullying.

Bullying behavior often starts in elementary school and peaks in the middle school years. However, it can attract more attention from adults when it appears in high school. The students are older and physically larger and the behavior is recognized as being less tolerable and more inappropriate.

Most bullying by students starts out verbally — teasing and put-downs — and may become progressively worse and assume physical dimensions. Bullying of any type, including cyberbullying, is unacceptable in our schools and our community. The Malden Public Schools, in partnership with our students and families, will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment that is free of bullying.

Definition: Bullying,, as defined by Massachusetts General Law chapter 71, section 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of school staff including but not limited to an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, but driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

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

Cyberbullying, as defined by Massachusetts General Law chapter 71, section 37O, 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. Cyber-bullying also includes:

- the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; or
- the creation, adaptation, or distribution of digitally manipulated content such as "deepfakes" that include images, audio, or video generated through artificial intelligence or other technologies

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 included in the definition of bullying above.

Bullying is 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 the school district
- 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, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Note: Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

In addition:

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

District Responsibilities: Each year, the district shall:

- Provide all staff members with notice of the bullying policy.
- Provide students and parents/guardians with notice of the relevant, student-related sections of the bullying policy in age-appropriate terms and in the languages which are most prevalent in the district.
- Provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade through an evidence-based curriculum.
- Provide professional development to build the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:
    - developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents;
    - 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 a perpetrator, victim 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.
- Inform parents and guardians about:
    - the bullying prevention curriculum of the school district;
    - how parents and guardians can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school district;
    - the dynamics of bullying; and
    - Online safety and cyber-bullying.

In addition, the district shall:

- Institute a policy regarding internet safety measures to protect students from inappropriate subject matter and materials that can be accessed via the internet and notify the parents or guardians of all students attending the school of the policy.
- Include the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing in Individualized Education Plans for children with a disability that affects their social skills development and for children who are vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of the child's disability.

Administrative Reporting Guidelines and Procedures: The principal of each school is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying policy at his or her school, including the following guidelines and procedures:

- Student and Parent Reporters
    - Students, parents, and other witnesses will report incidents of alleged bullying or retaliation to any staff member, orally or in writing, in a timely manner.
    - Students, parents, and other witnesses may use the linked Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form to report incidents.
    - Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report.
- Reports may be made anonymously. However, no disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- Staff Member Reporters
    - If a student is the alleged aggressor and staff witnesses or is informed of alleged bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, staff must report the incident to the principal or assistant principal immediately and complete a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form by the close of the school day (or by the following morning should the incident happen during an after-school activity).If an assistant principal receives the report, they will immediately inform the principal.

    - If a staff member is the alleged aggressor, then the staff member receiving the report shall reduce the incident to writing and will report the incident to the principal or assistant principal immediately.
- Note: 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.

Safety Measures

- Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents.
- Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, and/ or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target.
- The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting: the alleged target from bullying or retaliation, any student or staff who has reported bullying or retaliation, any student or staff who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, any student or staff who provides information during an investigation, or any student or staff who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.
- The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. This may include following up with the target to ensure that no other incidents of bullying or retaliation have occurred in response to the investigation.

Selection of Investigator and Timing of Investigation

- Any principal or assistant principal who receives a report of alleged bullying or retaliation will begin an investigation, or select a designee to begin the investigation, of the alleged incident within 24 hours of having received the report, or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- If the alleged aggressor is the principal or an assistant principal, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and taking other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.
- If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and taking all other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

Procedures for Investigation

- 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.
- During the investigation the principal or designee investigator will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary.
- The principal or designee will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.
- The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, alleged 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.
- Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to 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.
- Upon the completion of the investigation, the investigator will also complete an Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form detailing in writing: 1) findings, 2) the proposed disciplinary response, if any, 3) actions that will be taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation, and 4) the procedures and supports that will be used to restore a sense of safety for the victim going forward, as necessary.
- The principal or assistant principal will attach any related Student Disciplinary Reports that they have received to the Incident Report.
- There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians of alleged targets and witnesses prior to any investigation and other circumstances under which investigations occur before parents or guardians are contacted. In most circumstances, principal or designee will notify parent/ guardian of alleged target/ aggressor within 1 school day that an investigation is started. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00. The District will also comply with federal and state student confidentiality requirements at 603 CMR 23.00, FERPA, and 34 CFR Part 99.

<u>Procedures for Substantiated Allegations</u>

- If the allegations of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation are substantiated, the investigator will determine the appropriate disciplinary response, which may include mediation, detention, behavior plans, suspension (in or out-of-school), or expulsion.
- The parents of the alleged target and the alleged aggressor will be notified immediately regarding the findings, regardless of whether or not the allegations are substantiated.
- 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.

- The parents of the aggressor will also be notified of any proposed suspension and will be given an opportunity to participate in a hearing to dispute the charges and afforded all other rights given to students and parents under Massachusetts school discipline law.
- Repeated incidents of bullying by a student will result in more severe disciplinary actions.
- 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.
- 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.

Police Involvement

- 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 Malden Police Department.
- 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 the determination to involve law enforcement, the principal or designee may, 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.

Miscellaneous Procedures

- Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include a warning, detention or suspension (in or out-of-school).
- If any aggressor of bullying is a staff member, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken and may include a reprimand, suspension or termination depending on the severity of the incident.
- If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school in or outside the district, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall promptly notify

the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

- 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.
- The school district shall update the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan at least biennially.

VI. Collaboration with Families

The Malden Public Schools will engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase capacity to prevent and respond to bullying. Parents and guardians will be informed about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the Malden Public Schools including:

- How parents and guardians can support and reinforce the curricula at home and support the Malden Public Schools' Plan;
- The dynamics of bullying; and
- Online safety and cyberbullying.

Parents will be notified each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents and guardians. The Malden Public Schools' specific approaches to partnering with families will take into account age, climate, socio-economic factors, linguistic and cultural makeup of the students and their parents/ guardians.

Problem Resolution System:

Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v):

> The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the alleged target about the Department's Problem Resolution System and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the Problem Resolution System. This information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats:
>
> Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's 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.

Parent Education and Resources:

The Malden Public Schools will offer educational materials for parents and guardians that focus on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and the social competency curricula used by the individual schools and/or district.

Notification Requirements:

Each year the Malden Public Schools 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 Malden Public Schools will send parents notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the Malden Public Schools Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The Malden Public Schools will post the Plan, and is in the process of posting related information and resources including websites, etc. for parents on its website: https://www.maldenps.org/students-families/resources/bullying-prevention-intervention.

VII. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

(i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

(ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

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

VIII. Definitions

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

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
2. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
4. infringes on the rights of the target at school;
5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

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

School Staff Members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and/ or paraprofessionals.

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.

IX: Relationship to Other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Malden 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, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Nothing in this Plan prevents the Malden 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 Malden Public Schools policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37 H, 37H $^{1}/_{2}$ or 37H $^{3}/_{4}$, M.G. L. c. 71, §§ 41 and 42, M.G.L. c. 71, § 5, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.