Haverhill Public Schools

Bullying Prevention
and
Intervention Plan
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I. MISSION STATEMENT

HAVERHILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Haverhill Public Schools strives to create a safe and respectful learning atmosphere for not only its students but also the faculty and community. Therefore, we, in accord with The Massachusetts Bullying Prevention and Intervention Law, will not tolerate unlawful, disruptive behavior or any form of bullying. HPS believes that the target’s sense of safety and security is necessary for learning and productivity, and therefore all reports and complaints will be addressed with prompt action. This pledge toward action and respect is supported by our school community, our curricula and extracurricular programs, staff development and procedures, and parent and community involvement.

II. LEADERSHIP

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan.

The principal or assistant principal(s) of each school is responsible for:

- Receiving reports of alleged bullying and investigating
- Collecting and analyzing reports
- Developing a process for tracking aggressor and targets
- Providing support for the needs of the targets and aggressors
- Including student-specific language regarding the bullying plan in student and staff handbooks

The Assistant Superintendent is responsible for:

- Planning ongoing professional development in bullying prevention and intervention
- Reviewing and updating curricula

The HPS Anti-Bullying and Intervention Committee is responsible for:

- Planning for and implementing parent engagement and information sessions
- Reviewing and updating the Bullying Prevention Plan
III. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Annual training for all school staff on the plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or assistant principal 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.

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of essential tools for staff to create a safe environment that promotes civil communication and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of the staff members to become proactive to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

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

For the 2010-2011 school year, the Haverhill Public Schools has implemented and proposed the following professional development activities:

- In August, 2010, all district and building administration received a 2-hour orientation and training in anti-bullying statutes, and components of a sound anti-bullying plan presented by Klein, Kopelman and Paige, P.C.
- Each building principal received a 2-hour DVD for presentation and initial training for the building staff. Consistent with ongoing professional development; staff viewed this DVD and received this initial training in the Fall’ 2010. The goal of the professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civility, and respect for differences. P.D will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.
- The district celebrated International Bullying Awareness Day on November 19, 2010, and the students were provided grade-level appropriate training and reflection on bullying, retaliation, and cyber-bullying. Students were acknowledged and celebrated as peacemakers who promoted diversity and strong social leadership.
• Consultants from Committee for Children will provide a full day training for all elementary and middle school (K-8) counseling staff along with physical education staff and up to 12 elementary classroom teachers on Second step, and Steps to respect curriculum. The training will include intervention strategies to stop bullying; information on the interaction and power differential that can take place among aggressors, targets and witnesses to bullying; information on students at risk for bullying; information on cyberbullying and internet safety.

• The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is posted and accessible on the district website. Information provided to parents will be culturally sensitive and available in the predominant language in the home.

• In the Spring’ 2011, staff will provide up to 10 hours of parent training for all grade K-4 and 5-12 respectively on general bullying prevention, the dynamics of bullying, information on the bullying curriculum used in school, how parents can reinforce the local curricula (Second Step and Steps to Respect) at home and internet safety and cyberbullying.

• During the 2011-2012 school year, professional development will continue for staff on implementation of the aforementioned curricular on monthly ½ day in-service days.

Ancillary Professional Development Activities:

• Schools throughout the district have funded, through the PTO, various events for anti-bullying and social awareness.

• Through the Essex County District Attorney’s office, there have been numerous middle school anti-bullying awareness assemblies and professional development opportunities.

• Several staff participated in a training presented by Essex County District Attorney’s office on the new Anti-Bullying law, specifically focusing on technology.

• Parent training for anti-bullying has been implemented and will continue to be implemented throughout the school year.

HPS is investigating professional development with MARC (Mass Aggression Reduction Center) for leaders in their respective buildings.
Additional areas identified by the school or district 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;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

C. Written notice to staff. The school or district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

IV. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Haverhill Public Schools posts its information on school websites, and the principal in each building maintains resources and tools for the intervention and prevention of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. These tools may include but are not limited to: behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, social contracts, and individually focused curricula.

The strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets, and family members of those students is specific to each school and may include the use of adjustment counselors, guidance counselors, school psychologists, behavior specialists, teachers, nurses, special educators or other school or community resources.

Each school maintains a list of outside agencies and services available for students and their families. Parents/guardians should contact the guidance counselor or adjustment counselor at their child’s school to obtain assistance and/or referral to an outside agency.
V. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Haverhill Public Schools provides curricula and extracurricular activities that promote the prevention and awareness of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. Through the schools’ academic and extracurricular activities, students not only learn but are also provided tools on how to engage in a safe environment that is respectful of diversity and culture.

Table 1.1 Haverhill Public Schools Summary Current Anti-Bully Curricula and Extracurricular Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
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</table>
|            | • Second Step  
            | • Steps to Respect  
            | • Twenty-five people, middle and elementary educators, were trained in Second Step professional development.  
            | • Curriculum modules have been purchased for each building serving all students  | • Second Step  
            | • Steps to Respect  
            | • Twenty-five people, middle and elementary educators, were trained in Second Step professional development.  
            | • Curriculum modules have been purchased for each building serving all students  | • Bullying prevention curriculum is embedded in the wellness curriculum. The goal is to increase grade 9/10 bullying awareness  
            |                        |                        | • Some conflict and bullying embedded in all levels of ELA curriculum  
            |                        |                        | • Some embedded in social studies curriculum  
            |                        |                        | • Health and guidance counselors, will assist with the implementation of anti-bullying such as role play  
            |                        |                        | • School Connect by Changing Point (consideration for adoption)  |
### Student Handbook
- Specific policies and procedures against bullying will be presented
- Midyear addendum to handbook with explanation to parents and students via home communication

### Special Education
- Strong alternative behavior program
- IEPs need revision for established district wide goals

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Haverhill Public Schools’ extracurricular activities include but are not limited to:

**Violence Intervention Program (VIP)** This is a program that is implemented at Haverhill High School and in the four middle schools. It is designed to provide students with the opportunities to process behavioral choices and promote a strong, safe, diverse community. Their goal is to increase student dialogue about violence and peace in hopes to encourage discussion and acceptance. The ongoing work of the VIP Team is an important part of the HPS comprehensive bullying prevention plan in striving to create and sustain a change in school culture. The Haverhill Public Schools offers all middle and high school students the opportunity to join the Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) teams. The VIP team is an after school program that meets throughout the school year and focuses on activities to help prevent and reduce violence in the schools and the community while promoting peace, tolerance and respect. Members of the VIP team participate in numerous trainings throughout the year to gain leadership skills that help them educate their peers in a variety of violence prevention topics. They are involved in both creating and sponsoring violence prevention activities. The VIP teams at both the high school and middle schools participate in bullying awareness trainings, and receive skill training to empower them to be active bystanders in the reporting of incidents of bullying. VIP leaders conduct activities in their respective schools and community to promote anti bullying messages. This is done through developing public service announcements (PSAs) for local cable
access, sharing insights re: their understanding and ideas for bullying prevention; assisting in the planning of prevention efforts and networking with youth and adults to raise awareness and model pro-social skills.

**VIP Pilot -Bullying Prevention Program with Tilton Elementary School**

For the last 5 years, the VIP team has worked to develop and implement peer bullying prevention efforts throughout the district. With research showing that the earlier you begin bullying prevention efforts, the better, the VIP team is excited to begin a pilot program with Tilton Elementary School. VIP students visit elementary school classes on a weekly basis, sharing lessons from "Steps to Respect", a research-based bullying prevention curriculum. Lessons include activities that foster social-emotional competency and positive social values like building friendships and responding to bullying. The efforts of the VIP team strive to supplement lessons being offered by Tilton staff, but through the voice of youth.

**Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)** The Haverhill High School Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) is a student organization whose objective is to provide a safe and supportive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and their allies (LGBTA). The alliance also works to make the Haverhill High School community safe and welcoming to all students regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. The HHS GSA consists of approximately 25 students in all grade levels who meet weekly to discuss ideas, plan events and support one another. They participate in campaigns of awareness such as the Day of Silence, which works to put an end to the bullying and harassment of LGBT students and sends the message that hate will not be tolerated.

**Excel (Community Service)** Haverhill High School’s Excel program features not only community service but also outreach to create a safe, diverse community. Through projects and teamwork, the Excel club strives to promote a positive environment within Haverhill High School as well as the community.
VI. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

*Haverhill Public Schools strives to create a safe and respectful learning atmosphere for not only its students but also the faculty and community. Therefore, we, in accord with The Massachusetts Bullying Prevention and Intervention Law, will not tolerate unlawful, disruptive behavior or any form of bullying. HPS believes that the target’s sense of safety and security is necessary for learning and productivity, and therefore all reports and complaints will be addressed with prompt action. This pledge toward action and respect is supported by our school community, our curricula and extracurricular programs, staff development and procedures, and parent or community involvement.*

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

a) Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damages the target’s property  
b) Places the target in reasonable fear of harm or damage to his property  
c) Creates a hostile environment at school for the target  
d) Infringes on the rights of the target at school  
e) Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school

**Cyber-bullying 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 shall also include

a) The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person or 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 (a) to (e), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.
b) The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that maybe accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Furthermore, Haverhill Public Schools will act against all forms of retaliation, which 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.

Every student, parent, and employee of the school district must recognize the acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. Any student who believes that he has been a target of such should report it immediately to a teacher, principal, or member of the school community whom he/she trusts. Likewise, students and members of the school staff who witness or become knowledgeable about bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation should immediately report it as well.

VII. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Each year Haverhill Public Schools will provide parents and guardians with information on the social competency and anti-bullying curricula as well as the Bullying and Intervention Plan and other related information on its website.

Parent education and resources. The school or district will offer educational programs for parents or guardians that are focused on the parent components of anti-bullying and social competency curricula. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the School Committee, PTO, Parent Advisory Council, Student Councils, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the District Attorney’s Office.

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.

Upon investigation and determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or assistant principal(s) shall promptly notify the parents of the target and the aggressor of the determination and they will follow the school district or school’s procedures for responding to the bullying or retaliation. They will also notify the target’s parent of the actions that the school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.

VIII. STATE LAW DEFINITIONS

An **Aggressor** is a student 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:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

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

IX. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF BULLYING AND RETALIATION

It is the responsibility of the school administration and principals to clearly communicate to students and staff that bullying or harassment on any school premise (in the school building, on school grounds, on the bus or school sanctioned transportation, or at school sponsored functions) will not be tolerated. School principals or their assistant principals shall be responsible for implementation of bullying prevention and intervention procedures, including investigating all charges of bullying, cyber bullying and/or retaliation.

Violations of school and/or district policy and procedures will be addressed in conformance with existing disciplinary policies. In addition, all reporting, investigations, and response shall be consistent with local, state, and federal law regarding anti-discrimination and the protection of civil and human rights.

Reporting bullying or retaliation: All staff in the HPS’s are required to report immediately to the principal or assistant principal any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Bullying or retaliation will be submitted to the principal by the staff member within twenty-four hours of the incident through a written Incident Report.
Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by students, parents, or guardians, or other members of the community. These reports may be oral or written, face-to-face, via telephone or by email when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or assistant principal 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.

Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. Every attempt will be made to protect the anonymity of the reporter. The district will promptly and reasonably investigate all allegations of harassment, including bullying. No determination of bullying will be made solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Haverhill Public Schools will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community. The school or district will:

- Include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the student handbook.
- Make the Incident Reporting Form available in the school’s main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or assistant principal.
- Make the Incident Reporting Form available as a downloadable document on the school and district website.

The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or assistant principal, will be incorporated into:

- Student handbooks,
- Faculty/staff handbooks,
- On school and district website
Reporting by Staff

Any staff member that encounters an interaction that may be construed as bullying will first be asked to try to address the incident between the target(s) and aggressor(s). The staff member will then report the incident immediately to the principal or assistant principal so the investigation process may begin. This initial report should ideally include:

- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Individuals involved and their roles (e.g. target, aggressor, bystander)
- Information about if/how the incident is part of a pattern
- Any actions taken by the staff person to defuse the situation

Staff must use the Incident Report in order to report bullying.

Reporting by Students, Parents/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 assistant principal. This reporting may be done by telephone, face-to-face, by email, in writing, or anonymously.

- Students, parents/guardians and others are not required to complete the Incident Reporting Form to complete their report of a bullying incident. If a student, parent/guardian or other member of the school community makes an oral report of a bullying incident the principal/assistant principal will complete an Incident Reporting Form to document the allegation. The Incident Reporting Form may also be completed by the principal/assistant principal to complement written reports of bullying by a student, parent/guardian or other school community member in those instances where additional data is secured to substantiate or complete the allegation.

This form may be completed by school staff to complete the incident file. 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 assistant principal.

- Anonymous reporting will be managed at the school level. Students, parents/guardians and others will be able to make anonymous bullying reports, oral or
written, face-to-face, via telephone or by email. Anonymous reports will ideally include at least the following information:

- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Individuals involved and their roles (e.g. target, aggressor, bystander)
- Any knowledge of prior incidents that were reported or not
- The relationship of the reporter to the incident (e.g. witnessed firsthand, third party report)

Upon receipt of an anonymous report, the school will initiate a preliminary investigation. If the anonymous allegation is deemed to have potential merit an Incident Reporting Form will be completed by the investigating staff member, and the investigation process at the school level will proceed. No disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

**RESPONDING TO A REPORT**

**Safety:**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal and a team designated by her/him 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 will 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 target or aggressor’s schedule and access to the target
- Consultation with law enforcement or school resource officer

The principal or assistant principal will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.
The principal and her/his team will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from further acts of bullying, retaliation any students who (a) report bullying or retaliation, (b) witness bullying and/or retaliation, (c) provide information during an investigation of allegations of bullying or retaliation, or (d) has reliable information about an alleged act of bullying or retaliation.

Strategies that may be used to create a safer environment for the target(s) and/or aggressor(s) include:

- Increasing adult supervision at times and/or in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.
- Temporarily and/or permanently changing the target and/or aggressor(s)’s class schedule and/or seating arrangements to reduce opportunities for retaliation
- Establishing a safe zone for the target.

In addition, school official may take immediate steps, at their discretion, to protect the complaining party, alleged aggressor, and/or witness(s) pending completion of the investigation of the alleged bullying and may make suitable referrals for assistance to appropriate persons or agencies.

If an incident is determined to be bullying, the student will be disciplined according to the school handbook. The range of disciplinary actions that may be imposed as a result of bulling may be up to and including, but not limited to one or more of the following: verbal warning, written warnings, reprimands, detentions, short-term or long-term suspensions, notification to Haverhill Police Department, or expulsions from school as determined by the school administration.

Obligations to Notify Others:
The principal or assistant principal has primary responsibility to notify the following constituencies in writing when bullying or retaliation has occurred. All written communication with these constituencies must be copied to the Special Education Director so he/she is (a) appropriately informed, and (b) can assist with response as needed.
- **Notice to parents or guardians.** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or assistant principal will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or assistant principal 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 assistant principal first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or assistant principal 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 assistant principal 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. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or assistant principal shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

- Each assistant principal will maintain a log of incident and investigation reports. Substantiated claims will be turned into the resource officer for further investigation and filing with the proper authorities.
Investigation: The principal or assistant principal 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.

The principal or assistant principal 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. The following will take place:

- Interview target of aggression
- Interview any witnesses, including staff, parents or guardians
- Interview alleged aggressor

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or assistant principal, other staff members as determined by the principal or assistant principal, 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 assistant principal will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or assistant principal 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.

Investigating Anonymous Reports

Upon receipt of an anonymous report the principal or assistant principal will initiate a preliminary investigation. If the anonymous allegation is deemed to have potential merit an Incident Reporting Form will be completed and the investigation process at the school level will proceed.

Determinations: The principal or assistant principal will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying, or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or assistant principal 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 assistant principal 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 and a team of people he/she designates may choose to consult with the student’s teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target’s or aggressor’s parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or assistant principal will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what (a) disciplinary and (b) future prevention action is being taken. In accordance with M.G.L. c.71B, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, the investigation will be completed within 14 days from the date of the report. All notices to parents/guardians must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations.

**Taking Disciplinary Action**

If the principal or assistant principal decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or assistant principal, 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 student handbook.

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

If the principal or assistant principal determines that a false allegation of bullying or retaliation has been made appropriate actions will be taken. This may include disciplinary actions for those incidents where the accuser is a student.

**Promoting Safety for the Target and Others**

Upon the completion of the investigation, the principal or assistant principal will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and the sense of safety for others as well.
Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or assistant principal 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 assistant principal will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

**Range of Responses**

If it has been determined that bullying has occurred, the Haverhill Public Schools will take action that is appropriate under the circumstances as described in the student handbook. Action may be but is not limited to:

- Parent conferences/training
- Classroom/school transfer
- Exclusion from some school activities
- Increased adult supervision
- Work with school personnel on improving behavior
- Counseling
- Support Services or other therapeutic interventions
- Disciplinary Consequences
- Court Involvement

Additionally, some of these services may be recommended for the target as well.
APPENDIX A
INCIDENT REPORT
HAVERHILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bullying/Retaliation Incident Form

Date: Time: School:

Type of incident being reported (check all that applies):
Bullying ____ Cyber bullying ____ Retaliation ____

Name of Student Target Age: Grade

Name (s) of alleged aggressor(s) Age Grade

Investigation

☐ Review and attach Incident Reporting Form
☐ Review students’ discipline and school records (include IEP/504)
☐ Consult as needed with additional staff (e.g. SPED liaison, counselor, Nurse). Include names here:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

☐ Conduct student interviews- student writes up their account
☐ Read back to each student a summary of his/her account to ensure accuracy of their account

☐ If physical injuries occurred, ask nurse to examine target
☐ The following checked items are attached to this report:
  ○ Incident Reporting Form (if available)
  ○ Print-outs of blog posts, social networking pages, emails, etc
  ○ Copies of other evidence
  ○ Copies of investigator’s notes (e.g. transcripts of interviews, student account summaries)
  ○ Nurse report(s)
  ○ Police report(s)
  ○ Written statements from interviews, reporters, etc.
Determination:
☐ Check all that apply:
☐ 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: (must include at least of the following)
☐ causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage his/her property
☐ places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or damage to his/her property
☐ creates a hostile environment at school for the target
☐ infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
☐ materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
☐ involves an imbalance of perceived or real physical or social power between target and aggressor(s)
☐ retaliation from reporting of previous incident
☐ Provide brief description of the nature of the bullying (if any):

☐ Provide a final determination:
☐ Incidents did not meet the standard of bullying
☐ Bullying has occurred and will be dealt with in- house
☐ Criminal bullying has occurred and police should be notified of possible criminal charges

Response Plan (if any)
Disciplinary Actions:

Notification and Documentation
☐ Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the target
☐ Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of aggressor
☐ School information system
☐ Counselor of target
☐ Counselor of aggressor
☐ SPED (for repeat offenders)
☐ Police (if criminal charges are pursued)
☐ Other schools, coaches, staff members (as appropriate) for implementing the disciplinary and student safety plan

Administrator/Investigator Signature

Date