



## **Blue Hills Regional Technical High School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The following is our Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan which is required under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and supported by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to address bullying and cyber bullying. BHRTHS is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of bullying in the schools. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation.

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**Bullying Hot Line: Call in an incident to be addressed by the school**

**Bullying Email: Email an incident to be addressed by the school**

**781-828-5800 ext 451**

**[bullyreport@bluehills.org](mailto:bullyreport@bluehills.org)**

## I. **Our Responsibility:**

*BHRTHS is committed to promoting positive school climate which is both safe and expectant for students. The school and community have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. We as a whole are responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. As of December 31, 2010, each school district is required to present their "Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan" to the Department of Education. The following is what the Department of Education requests to be part of each Plan and what Blue Hills Regional Technical High School has incorporated into their own Plan. Below is an overview of what our Plan contains and **Part VII** is the simpler version which reflect the reporting, responding, our action plan and the follow-up that BHRTHS provides. BHRTHS has adopted what the Department of Education requires and an "abbreviated" version is what our handbook will contain.*

- A. Public involvement in developing the Plan. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Plan is developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Consultation must include, at a minimum, notice and a public comment period before the Plan is adopted by the school committee or equivalent authority.
- B. Assessing needs and resources. The Plan is this school's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, will assess the adequacy of current programs; review current policies and procedures; review available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services.

Blue Hills will be doing the following to allow for initial and periodic needs assessments: 1) surveying students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues; and 2) collecting and analyzing building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and "hot spots" in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses). This information will help to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies.

- C. Planning and oversight. This plan will identify the school leaders responsible for the following tasks under the Plan: 1) receiving reports on bullying; 2) collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes; 3) creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors; 4) planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law; 5) planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors; 6) choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use; 7) developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them; 8) amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; 9) leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials; and 10) reviewing and updating the Plan each year, or more frequently.

## D. BHRTHS School Priorities:

Blue Hills Regional Technical High School (BHRTHS) expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

This school is 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.

We 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 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 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber bullying, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of 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 principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

## **II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*This Plan reflects the requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 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. This Plan states the content and frequency of staff training and ongoing professional development as determined by the school's needs, and lists other topics to be included in these staff programs. The locally identified additional areas of training should be based on needs and concerns identified by school staff.*

*The law lists six topics that must be included in professional development. Additional topics may be identified by the school leadership as they consider the unique needs of the school or community. Plans should also identify which trainings will be provided school-wide.*

- A. Annual staff training on the Plan. 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 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 goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, the content of school-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:
  - (i) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
  - (ii) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
  - (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
  - (iv) 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;
  - (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyber bullying; and

(vi) 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
- constructively managing classroom behaviors
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies
- applying constructive disciplinary practices
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

C. Written notice to staff. The school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the BHRTHS Policy.

### III. RESOURCES AND SERVICES

*A key aspect to promoting a positive school climate is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets (victims), aggressors (bully), families, and others are addressed. In order to enhance the school's capacity to prevent, intervene, and respond effectively to bullying, available services should reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of involved parties. This Plan includes a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets, and family members of those students.*

- A. Identifying resources. Our Plan includes the school's process for identifying its capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. This will include a review of current staffing and programs that support the creation of a positive school environment by focusing on early interventions and intensive services.
- B. Counseling and other services. Our Plan identifies the availability of appropriate resources within the school. BHRTHS has made available to all students when appropriate; behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.
- C. 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 a student has a disability that affects social skills development, or that a student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to help develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.
- D. Referral to outside services. BHRTHS has an established referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services. (counseling services, for example) Clear protocols will help students and families access appropriate and timely services. Referrals must comply with relevant laws and policies. C

#### **IV. CURRICULUM AND OTHER APPROACHES**

*The law requires each school to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's curricula. Curricula must be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development. Part of the BHRTHS curriculum involves the following:*

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches. 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 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 Plan should include specific information about how and when the school will review the Plan with students.

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 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, 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.

#### **V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, BHRTHS has put in place policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur.

- 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. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. BHRTHS has a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, voicemail, and a dedicated email address.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. However, BHRTHS will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school's 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, BHRTHS 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 designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

#### 1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee 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.

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

BHRTHS expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee.

### B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

#### 1. Safety

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, 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 take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student

who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. Safety precautions such as: name confidentiality, periodic check –ins, schedule changing if appropriate, identifying a “ safe person” who is a staff member, as well as other constant monitoring of the student ( staff and peer buddy system) will take place until the situation is resolved.

## 2. Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation.
- b. Notice to Another School or District. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action.
- c. Notice to Law Enforcement. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. 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 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 aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with this Plan and with BHRTHS school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

- C. Investigation. The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

- D. Determinations. The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee

will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. Discipline will be consistent with the school code of conduct which may include, but not limited to, a verbal warning up to suspension.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. The principal or designee will remain in contact with parents/guardians letting them know of actions taken to help prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

E. Responses to Bullying. BHRTHS will incorporate many of the strategies below for building students' skills, and other individualized interventions in response to remediate or prevent further bullying and retaliation.

#### 1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

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

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand 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 principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with this Plan and with the BHRTHS School's code of conduct.

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

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or

retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action. Discipline will be consistent with the school code of conduct which may include, but not limited to, a verbal warning up to suspension.

### 3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. The principal or designee will also remain in contact with parents/guardians letting them know of actions taken to help prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation, if and when necessary.

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.

## VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

*The BHRTHS Plan will introduce strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the school to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. The law requires the school Plan to include provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the school including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyber bullying. Parents and guardians are also notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents or guardians. School-specific approaches to collaboration should take into account age, climate, socio-economic factors, linguistic, and cultural make-up of students and the parents.*

*BHRTHS will involve our parents by:*

- A. Parent education and resources. The school will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations. These programs will help each parent/guardian better understand our curricula and will include topics, hand-outs and possible videos or other educational material to use at home in collaboration with the school policy.
- B. Notification requirements. Each year the school 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 cyber bullying and online safety. The school 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 will post the Plan and related information on its website.

## VII. DEFINITIONS

*Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as noted below. .*

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:

- 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, 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.

## **VIII. THE BLUE HILLS REGIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN**

*To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying acts and retaliation, BHRTHS has put in place policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know that steps/actions will be taken to document and address reported incidents or acts of bullying and retaliation. This plan details procedures staff will use when reporting of incidents, what reports are made available for students and parents/guardians to report incidents, the order process in which a report of bullying is responded to, and the procedures followed by the principal or designee once a report is made.*

### **Blue Hills Regional Technical High School DISTRICT BULLYING POLICY**

Blue Hills Regional Technical High School "BHRTHS" is committed to maintaining a school environment free of bullying. Bullying of students by other students or by staff will not be tolerated by Blue Hills Regional Technical High School. Acts of bullying are to be reported and acted upon while students are on school grounds, property within the jurisdiction of the School District; on school buses, attending or engaging in school-related activities. In situations where bullying occurs at non-school related locations or through non-school technology, BLRTHS will respond if the bullying affects the school environment.

Each student and staff member of BHRTHS is personally responsible for ensuring that his/her conduct is not intimidating to any other student. Students or staff exhibiting intimidating behavior are required to cooperate in any investigation of alleged bullying if requested to do so by the person conducting the investigation. Any individual who prevents or attempts to hinder an individual from making a complaint of bullying or fails to cooperate with, or interferes in any way with the investigation of such a complaint, will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Bullying Prohibited:** It is a violation for anyone, including another student or staff member, to bully or intimidate a student through conduct or communication as defined below.

**Definition of Bullying:**

Bullying is defined as the severe or repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students or staff member directed at another student that has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to his or her property;
- placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- creating a hostile environment at school for the bullied student;
- infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school
- power imbalance.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber bullying, are prohibited in the following areas:

- on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**What constitutes bullying:**

Bullying is determined by the perspective of a reasonable person being made fearful, intimidated, or unsafe. Therefore, students and staff should consider how their behavior might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for students to make it clear in a mature/non-threatening or intimidating manner to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

**What Bullying is Not:**

It is equally important for all members of the school community to understand that conflict is not automatically synonymous with bullying. Arguing, bantering back-and-forth, ignoring, roughhousing and fighting, while potentially serious forms of conflict that may necessitate disciplinary action by the school, are not necessarily instances of bullying. *Bullying is characterized by intention, repetition and/or power imbalance.* Not every conflict meets these criteria.

**Reporting Bullying:**

Students who witness bullying are strongly encouraged to report incidents to a teacher, administrator, or counselor. An administrator will record and/or investigate all reports and make a determination regarding future steps to be taken. Students involved in bullying may be asked to participate in meet regularly with a guidance counselor or administrator. Many consequences for bullying may include disciplinary action and/or referral to the Canton Police Department. Knowingly or intentionally making false accusations about bullying will result in disciplinary action.

**Bullying and Retaliation Prohibited:**

Bullying in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. In addition, retaliation against a student who has brought a bullying complaint to the attention of the School District or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is also prohibited and will not be tolerated by BHRTHS. Retaliation can be considered a second act of aggression toward a target.

## **Blue Hills Regional Technical High School Process for Responding to a Report of Bullying**

This process applies only to situations where bullying is alleged. Disciplinary incidents will be reported using the school disciplinary action process or the collective bargaining agreement, as appropriate. Investigations of staff members alleged to be engaging in bullying behavior may, upon the discretion of the administration, be conducted with different procedures than those reported below.

### **1. Step One: Complete Incident Report**

#### If a staff member or other adult witnesses reports an incident:

- Reports incident to designated administrative staff member
- Determine if there are safety issues that must be addressed immediately
- Written incident Report Forms are filled out

#### If a student reports an incident to a staff member:

- Acknowledge student's feelings
- Determine if there are safety issues that must be addressed immediately
- Staff member completes written incident report and gives to designated administrative staff member

### **2. Step Two: Administration Investigation**

#### **If criminal activity is alleged, make contact with School Resource Officer.**

#### Interview alleged Target of bullying:

- Alleged Target and alleged Aggressor should be separated
- Interview the alleged Target (Do not speak to the alleged Target in presence of alleged Aggressor)
- Interview any witness
- Document any witness accounts and collect and preserve evidence
- Protecting the alleged Target's confidentiality is extremely important
- Reinforce and Encourage the alleged Target to report any additional incidents with the alleged Aggressor

#### Interview the student accused of being the Aggressor:

- Identify the problem
- Interview the alleged Aggressor.
- Try to focus more on the alleged Aggressor's behavior
- In case of denial or if further information is needed, interview witnesses
- Document the witness account and collect and preserve evidence
- Make the alleged Aggressor aware of consequences of retaliation against alleged Target and reporter

**After speaking with both the alleged Target and alleged Aggressor, communicate with parents and document conversation. Make the school principal aware of situation.**

### **3. Step Three: Create an Action Plan-Assign Consequences if needed**

- Assign appropriate consequence, if necessary
- If Bullying has been substantiated, create a safety plan for the Target as appropriate
- Contact Parents of alleged Target and alleged Aggressor to explain actions/if any

- If the alleged Aggressor denies the incident or there is insufficient evidence, tell the alleged Aggressor that you will continue to monitor behavior
- School Staff will be notified of alleged incident and will be asked to monitor safety of the Target
- Counselors will be made available to meet with student(s) individually

4. Step Four: **Document Incident and Consequences/Follow-up**

- Document outcome of investigation on the Incident Report Form/Action Plan Form
- Follow up: provide update to appropriate staff member(s)
- School Staff monitor students' behavior of alleged Aggressor
- Notify teachers who have contact with the alleged Target and alleged Aggressor

**BLUE HILLS REGIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL  
BULLYING INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Bullying is defined as the act of one or more individuals intimidating one or more persons through verbal, physical, emotional or electronic action that is intentionally cruel and repetitive. Bullying can take many forms and occur in any setting. Bullying is characterized by an imbalance of physical, psychological or emotional power.

Name of Reporter: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Alleged Target Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Alleged Agressor(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILS OF INCIDENT:**

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- To your knowledge, has this occurred before?      \_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_ NO
- Are there immediate transportation or safety concerns?    \_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_ NO

If yes, please explain:

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## BHRTHS ACTION PLAN

*To be completed by school administrator or designated staff*

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Interview Alleged Target	_____	_____ _____ _____ _____
Interview Alleged Aggressor	_____	_____ _____ _____ _____
List/Interview Witnesses	_____	_____ _____ _____ _____
Describe any supporting evidence: text, drawings photo. etc	_____	_____ _____ _____ _____
Parent of Target Notified	_____	_____ _____ _____ _____
Parent of Alleged Aggressor notified	_____	_____ _____ _____ _____

**Summary of Findings** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Disciplinary Action(s) Taken:**

**School Action:**

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**SRO/Police Action  
if necessary**

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**Follow-Up Plan**

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**PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF BULLYING**

