

# Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Brehm Preparatory School's mission is to empower students with learning challenges to realize and maximize their full potential throughout their lives. In order to achieve this mission, our students must be in a safe, accepting, and nurturing environment. Bullying is detrimental to the academic, emotional, and physical well-being of all its victims and in violation of state law and school policy. All forms of Bullying are strictly prohibited. Bullying incidents will be treated as a critical offense, regardless of the age, sex, race, or socio-economic status, or role. Brehm's policies fully support the Illinois School Code's anti-bullying policy as outlined in the enactment of Public Acts 98-0669 and 98-0801.

## **Definition**

"Bullying", including "cyber-bullying", includes any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

## **Forms of Bullying**

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

## **Examples**

- 1) Physical acts, such as inappropriate, unwanted, uninvited, or injurious physical contact with another; stalking, sexual assault, and destruction or damage to the property of another individual
- 2) Written or electronic communication of any type that incorporates language or depictions that would constitute bullying, using any medium (including, but not limited to, cell phones, computers, websites, electronic networks, instant messages, text messages, and e-mails)
- 3) Verbal threats made to another; blackmail, or demands for protection money
- 4) Non-verbal threats or intimidation such as aggressive or menacing gestures, posturing
- 5) Direct or indirect, relationally aggressive behavior such as social isolation, rumor spreading, or damaging someone's reputation
- 6) Any of the above conduct which occurs off school grounds when such conduct creates, or reasonably can be expected to create, a substantial disruption in the school setting and/or at school sponsored activities and events.
- 7) Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking put-downs, or demeaning humor relating to a student's race, color, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics, whether or not the student actually possesses them, that could reasonably be expected to result in the disruption of school activities or that results in a hostile educational environment for the student.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Bullying is much less likely to take place and persist in a setting where the adults have made it explicitly clear that they are paying attention, that they care, that they will not tolerate it, and that there are outlets for the victims and consequences for the bullies. Furthermore, bullying is diminished when student

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“bystanders” are prepared and encouraged to step in quickly and appropriately. Bullying conduct that occurs on school property or at school-sponsored events; while students are being transported or walking to and from school-sponsored events; or when the conduct would substantially interfere with the educational environment, regardless of where the conduct occurs must be reported immediately. The school will exercise due diligence in pursuing the accuracy of all reports while maintaining student confidentiality.

Reporters may be bystanders or those being bullied. No reporters of bullying will be retaliated against for reporting bullying conduct. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions. Reporters may email or call [jeremy.robbyns@brehm.org](mailto:jeremy.robbyns@brehm.org) (ext. 1301), [terri.douglas@brehm.org](mailto:terri.douglas@brehm.org), (ext. 1200), [pam.altman@brehm.org](mailto:pam.altman@brehm.org) (ext. 1903), or [aaron.lee@brehm.org](mailto:aaron.lee@brehm.org) (ext. 1108). The school will do everything in its power to keep reports confidential and the source anonymous. A reporter may elect to make an anonymous report by requesting a confidential reporting from the human resource office room 1306 (ext. 1306). Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited and those who engage in such action will be reviewed for corrective action in accordance with those stated for bullying. Any student who falsely and intentionally accuses another of bullying will be subject to appropriate behavioral measures.

All reports will be heard, read, acted upon, processed and filed. Reports will be filled in the Blackbaud data base system. Each report should identify the type of bullying that occurred, the student involved (In the case of multiple student involvement, a separate report will be submitted for each), and the staff that processed the situation; the time of day, the location of the conduct, a description of what transpired, and intervention applied; communications with the parents or guardians; and the outcome. The Head of School, in coordination with the Dean of Students, shall investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of the school’s jurisdiction and requires that the School provides the victim with information regarding services that are available through the school and throughout the community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs. Once a report has been submitted student privacy rights under FERPA will be strictly followed. Parents, or guardians will be notified that school day informing parents or guardians of the student’s involvement in the alleged incident of bullying.

### **Intervention**

Any student who engages in bullying will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including suspension, expulsion, and referral to local law enforcement. A student’s bullying conduct may also be addressed through other behavioral interventions, which may include, restitution, counseling, remediation, and/or community service. Any student who is a bystander to any bullying conduct and who fails to take action to discourage bullying may be subject to similar disciplinary actions. Students and parents or guardians, as appropriate, will be apprised of the availability of social work services, counseling, psychological services, and other interventions and restorative measures. We are committed to providing the appropriate Brehm programs and/or services needed to addresses the trauma that may ensue from bullying related to school functions. When Brehm resources are not adequate, we will help parents or guardians locate and reach out for help from other appropriate agencies.

### **Education**

Education is highly valued by Brehm as a means to alleviate ignorance and prejudice, create understanding and acceptance of diversity, promote higher ethical standards, and knowledge about the world in which we must leave cooperatively to survive. The General Assembly finds that “school districts and non-public, nonsectarian elementary and secondary schools should educate students, parents, and school district personnel with educating others on the behaviors constitute prohibited bullying” 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7. The School’s bullying prevention and response plan is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians. The Head of School, in conjunction with the Dean of Students, ensures that this policy is posted on the School’s website and it is included in the Student

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Handbook that is distributed to students, parents, and school personnel, including new hires, annually. The policy is also posted around campus where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. As a part of Campus Forum, the student's review their handbooks on a quarterly basis. Brehm students attend weekly campus forum meetings aimed at creating a safe and nurturing teen culture. Diversity, bullying, healthy relationships, and teen codes are explored and discussed regularly. Additionally, all staff members address these characteristics during teachable moments across the day.

The Head of School shall assist the Board with its evaluation and assessment of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, without limitation:

- A. The frequency of victimization;
- B. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
- C. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
- D. The types of bullying utilized; and
- E. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that Brehm already collects for other purposes. The Head of School must post the information developed as a result of the policy evaluation on the Google Drive so that information can be provided to other school administrators, Board members, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students.

### LEGAL REF.:

[405 ILCS 49/](#), Children's Mental Health Act.  
[105 ILCS 5/10-20.14/ 5/24-24](#), and [5/27-23.7](#).  
[23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240](#) and [§1.280](#).

ADOPTED: June 14, 2018

MODIFIED: June 29, 2021