

Metropolitan Preparatory & Laureate Day School

Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Prevention Policy

Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

This Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment Prevention Policy is created pursuant to and is in compliance with Section 22-110 of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/22-110). Bullying, intimidation and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and the school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors is an important goal of Metro Prep and Laureate Day School (or "the School") and a topic for many classroom and group discussions. Metro Prep and Laureate Day School serve a unique population of students with disabilities and, therefore, the policy set forth herein is tailored to address the needs of our student population. Bullying causes physical, psychological, and emotional harm to students, which interferes with a safe, civil, and healthy learning environment. Additionally, bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping or dropping out of school, fighting, use of drugs/alcohol, sexual harassment, and sexual violence.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, order of protections status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristics is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Definitions (Section 22-110 of the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/22-110)

Bullying includes *cyber-bullying*, and means 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; or
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.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, posting or distributing sexually explicit images, 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.

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation 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 system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity 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 effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, pursuant to Section 22-110 of the Illinois School Code, cyberbullying also includes the posting or distribution of an unauthorized digital replica by electronic means if the posting or distribution creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying per this policy.

Restorative measures means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school, and (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

School personnel means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer, including without limitation school administrators, teachers, school guidance counselors, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, and school security guards.

Bullying Report Process

The Principal or designee shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan that advances the School's goal of providing all students with a safe learning environment free of bullying and harassment. This plan is consistent with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b).

1. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of this School. However, nothing in the School's bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.
2. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing by phone, in person, by e-mail or in writing to the School Complaint Managers listed below or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who have information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to promptly report it to the School Complaint Managers or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted;

however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Complaint Managers:

Mrs. Tricia Elsner, Principal, Metro Prep & Laureate Day School
2525 E. Oakton Street, Suite D-8
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
Phone: (847) 956-7912, ext. 4415
pelsner@metroprep.org

Dr. Sierra Nathanson, Clinical Director, Metro Prep & Laureate Day School
2525 E. Oakton Street, Suite C-8
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
Phone: (847) 956-7912, ext. 4321
sierra.nathanson@metroprep.org

Response to Bullying Reports

Upon receipt of a report or bullying, Metro Prep and Laureate Day School will investigate whether such reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of its jurisdiction pursuant to this policy, including the following:

1. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, as applicable to Metro Prep and Laureate Day School, and its policies, the parents/guardians of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying will be notified of such, along with threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, **within 24 hours** after the school's administration is made aware of the student's involvement in the incident. As appropriate, the above-named Administrators shall also discuss the need for interventions and the availability of services, which may include social work services, counseling, school psychological services, and other interventions, including community-based services and restorative measures. Metro Prep and Laureate Day School shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent/guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained by the school within the 24-hour period.
2. Metro Prep and Laureate Day School serve a unique population of students requiring a therapeutic day school placement. Due to the nature of the population served and the possibility that certain acts may be manifestations of a student's disability, and/or a trauma-response behavior, rather than an intentional act of bullying, as part of determining whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of the School's jurisdiction, each reported instance of bullying will be reviewed and assessed for the need to investigate on a case-by-case basis and as determined to be appropriate by the School.
3. If determined to be appropriate for investigation and within the School's jurisdiction, the Principal or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying by, among other things:
 - a. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident.

- b. Keeping confidential any reports of bullying to the extent possible given the need to investigate the reported claim.
 - c. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
 - d. Notifying the appropriate school staff, specifically the Principal or his/her designee, and referring school district personnel of the reported incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
 - e. Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights and confidentiality, as applicable to the School, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation as deemed appropriate and an opportunity to meet with the Principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying, as deemed appropriate.
 - f. The Principal or designee shall investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of the School's jurisdiction and shall require that the School provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the School, referring school district and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.
4. The Principal or designee may implement interventions to address reports of bullying. Interventions that may be taken to address findings of incidents of bullying in the school, include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.
5. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is a violation of this policy and is strictly prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions and anyone engaging in retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports an act of bullying may face consequences and appropriate remedial action as deemed necessary by the School and consistent with the School's disciplinary policies.
6. Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in an intentional act of bullying will be subject to disciplinary consequences as deemed appropriate and consistent with the school's disciplinary policies, and/or the disciplinary policies of the student's referring school district, as applicable and deemed appropriate. The School is a nonpublic, therapeutic school and an agent of Illinois placing school districts, as such, the School may share information regarding incidents of bullying with the referring school district(s) of those students involved in a bullying incident, and an individualized education program ("IEP") meeting may be convened to discuss the impact, if any, on the student's current educational program, placement, supports and services. Additional services that are available within the referring school district and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs, should be discussed directly with the student's referring school district by the parent/guardian.
7. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying in good faith or supplying information, even if the School's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. 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.

Policy Evaluation

Please also note the following related to the development, notification and publication, and evaluation of this policy:

1. This bullying prevention policy and response plan is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.
2. The Principal or designee shall include this policy on the school's existing, publicly accessible website, in the student handbook, and, as applicable, where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy will also be provided periodically throughout the school year to students and faculty and distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.
3. The Principal or designee shall engage in the process of evaluating and assessing this policy's outcomes and effectiveness every two years and shall make any necessary and appropriate revisions. This review 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.
4. No later than September 30th of the subject year, the policy must be filed with the State Board of Education after being updated.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that the School already collects for other purposes. The Principal or designee will make available the information developed or collected as a result of the evaluation process on the school's website or will provide the information to school administrators, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students.

This policy is consistent with the School's policies.

Date of Adoption: 8/5/2025

Date of Most Recent Review/Reevaluation: 9/17/26