



# BULLYING HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION INTERVENTION PLAN

The Plymouth Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees, or the public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, homelessness, religion, age, economic/socio-economic status or immigration status. The Plymouth Public Schools are also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

**Español:** Las Escuelas Públicas de Plymouth no toleran la discriminación contra estudiantes, padres, empleados o el público por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, orientación sexual, identidad de género, discapacidad, falta de vivienda, religión, edad, estado económico / socioeconómico o estado migratorio. Las Escuelas Públicas de Plymouth también se comprometen a mantener un ambiente escolar libre de acoso basado en la raza, el color, la religión, el origen nacional, el género, la orientación sexual, la identidad de género, el embarazo o el estado de embarazo, la edad o la discapacidad. Además, el Distrito proporciona igualdad de acceso a todos los grupos juveniles designados. De acuerdo con los requisitos de la Ley McKinney-Vento, el Distrito tampoco discrimina a los estudiantes sobre la base de la falta de vivienda.

**Português:** As Escolas Públicas de Plymouth não toleram discriminação contra estudantes, pais, funcionários ou o público com base em raça, cor, origem nacional, sexo, orientação sexual, identidade de gênero, deficiência, sem-teto, religião, idade, status econômico/socioeconômico ou status de imigração. As Escolas Públicas de Plymouth também estão comprometidas em manter um ambiente escolar livre de assédio baseado em raça, cor, religião, origem nacional, gênero, orientação sexual, identidade de gênero, estado de gravidez ou gravidez, idade ou deficiência. Além disso, o Distrito fornece acesso igualitário a todos os grupos de jovens designados. Coerente com os requisitos da Lei McKinney-Vento, o Distrito também não discrimina os estudantes com base na falta de moradia.

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# **MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

## **MODEL BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) created the Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan required under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, in consultation with state agencies, school personnel, advocacy organizations, and other interested parties. The Model Plan's format parallels the draft Behavioral Health and Public Schools Framework and is designed to be used by schools and school districts as a framework for developing local Plans. In some sections, there are examples of specific language that can be incorporated into local Plans, and in others, there are recommendations for decision-making and planning strategies. Schools and districts may choose to use this format for creating their own Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans or develop an alternative format. ***A sample incident reporting form is attached as Appendix A.***

Please note that in the Model Plan and other Department publications, we use the word "target" instead of "victim" and "aggressor" instead of "perpetrator."

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **PRIORITY STATEMENT**

The Plymouth Public Schools is committed to a safe educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and other stakeholders free from harassment, intimidation, or bullying. It is the policy of the Plymouth Public Schools to prohibit harassment, intimidation, and bullying by any means, including but not limited to electronic, written, oral or physical acts, either direct or indirect, when such acts physically harm or psychologically distress a student(s) and/or property, substantially interfere with a student's education, threaten the overall educational environment or the wellbeing of a person(s) and/or substantially disrupt the operation of the school. (See policy 6.15, Anti-bullying Policy.)

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

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying. The Plymouth Public Schools 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 or designee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

As required by M.G.L. c. 71 §. 370, this Plan was developed through consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement officers, students, and parents. Notice and a public comment period were provided before the Plan was adopted by the School Committee.

## ASSESSING NEEDS AND RESOURCES

This Plan is intended to serve as a blueprint for enhancing the District's capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, the Plymouth Public Schools, with input from families and staff, will continuously assess the adequacy of our existing programs, review our current policies and procedures, analyze the available data on bullying and behavioral incidents, and assess the available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services.

This "mapping" process will assist our schools in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Our District findings will serve us as we revise policies and procedures, establish partnerships with local community agencies, and set priorities. At least once every four years, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school or district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department.

***The Plymouth Public Schools will utilize the following as a means of periodic needs assessment:***

- Surveying students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues.
- Collect and analyze building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying.

This information will help to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies.

## PLANNING AND OVERSIGHT

***The following school and district leaders are responsible for the corresponding tasks under the Plan:***

1. Receiving reports on bullying (principals or designee and Superintendent's Office).
2. Collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes (principals or designee and Superintendent's Office).
3. Creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors (principals or designee).
4. Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law (principals or designee, Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction, Office of Pupil Services).
5. Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors (principals or designee, Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction, Office of Pupil Services).

6. Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use (Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction).
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 the implementation of them (School Committee, Superintendent's Office).
8. Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct (School Committee and Superintendent's Office).
9. Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials (principals or designee and Superintendent's Office).
10. Reviewing and updating the Plan on an annual basis (principals or designee and Superintendent's Office).

### **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **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 assistant 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 grade levels throughout the school district.

Annual training will be provided 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.

Staff members hired after the start of the school year will be 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 past two years.

Training will be based on the Train-the-Trainer model provided by the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center. PowerPoint presentations will be used for targeted groups within the district. All staff in a group will receive the same training.

#### **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, s 370, the content of school-wide and district-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.

**Professional Development offerings in the district:**

- I. Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum
- II. Steps to Respect Bullying Prevention Program
- III. MARC Training
- IV. Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training

**C. Written Notice to Staff**

Plymouth Public Schools 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 Plymouth Public Schools Teacher Handbook and the code of conduct.

**ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

Plymouth Public Schools is committed to providing adequate levels of personnel and services to support the creation of a positive school environment and to support the social and emotional well-being of all of our students. This is accomplished through annual reviews of staffing levels and programs by administration, faculty, and staff. The resources, supports, and programs provided for students and their families include:

- School Psychologists
- Guidance Counselors
- School District and Administrators
- Library of Resources including publications, CDs, DVDs, etc.
- Coaches
- Adjustment Counselors
- School Nurses
- Health/Wellness Teachers
- School Resource Officers
- Behavior Specialists
- Speech/Language Pathologists
- Occupational Therapists
- Special Education
- ELL Support
- Child Study Teams
- Crisis Response Teams
- Social Skills Groups
- Transitional Meetings for Students
- Behavior Intervention Plans
- Functional Behavioral Assessments

- Community-Based Counseling Programs
- After-School Activities & Programs

The school counselors and school psychologists maintain a list of outside agencies and services available for students and families. Parents/Guardians should contact these personnel at their child's school to obtain assistance and/or a referral to an outside agency.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, s 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines that the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that the 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 develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

### **ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

The *Plymouth Public Schools* community is committed to creating and maintaining a positive and proactive school environment, which promotes our core value of respect for human differences. Children learn best when they are safe, connected, respected, and empowered with the skills to analyze, think critically, problem solves, set goals, and work cooperatively with the rich and diverse members of their learning community. Proactively addressing issues of anti-social behavior creates a healthy learning environment conducive to improved academic achievement. PPS is prepared to respond to actions, which are contrary to a respectful community. Our Student and Staff Handbooks outline the expectations of our community, as well as the consequences of not meeting these expectations.

#### **SPECIFIC BULLYING PREVENTION APPROACHES:**

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

1. Using scripts and role-plays to develop skills.
2. Cooperative activities, which require responsibility for all students and collaboration to complete activities.
3. 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.
4. Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance.
5. Emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies.
6. Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications.
7. Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

#### **GENERAL TEACHING APPROACHES:**

***The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:***



1. Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines.
2. Creating a safe school and classroom environment for all students, including students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students.
3. Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline.
4. Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors.
5. 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.
6. Using the Internet safely.
7. Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities.

### INSTRUCTIONAL AND CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

The more successful our students are in the classroom, the less likely they are to be bullied for not being successful in school. The content of the curriculum also helps prevent bullying by educating children on their responsibilities as members of a community. The following aspects of our curriculum, combined with our excellent instructional practices, are critical to bullying prevention:

1. Counseling Staff: Social Groups—Counselors run social groups at each grade level to help those students who have difficulty socializing to integrate more effectively. These students are historically the targets of bullies. • Continued work with the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC).
2. The elementary level bullying curriculum will be integrated by the elementary classroom teachers. The secondary health and the physical education department will integrate curriculum related to bullying into their wellness curriculum.
3. Internet Safety Plan: The Plymouth Public Schools Technology Curriculum addresses Standard 2 of the DESE Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards and Expectations for grades K through 8, which states: “Demonstrate responsible use of technology and an understanding of ethics and safety issues in using electronic media.” The technology curriculum is hosted on a secure site for teachers to access with a login and password. Communication is an effective tool for educators when helping students to avoid the dangers that exist on the Internet. The district uses NetSmartz to provide on- and offline learning activities to facilitate discussions with students about Internet safety for students in grades one, two, and four. In grade three, the district uses an online tool called Woogi World to teach Internet Safety and bullying. Woogi World is the world's leading virtual educational community for K-6 students utilizing the latest gaming and social networking technologies to teach children about Internet Safety. Students in grade five are taught about Digital Citizenship as a means to prevent bullying and protect students from using the Internet. Digital Citizenship is a concept, which helps students understand what they should know in order to use technology appropriately. The Library/Media Specialists have books that address the topic of bullying and Internet Safety to support the technology curriculum.
4. The educational technology staff participated in the MARC Bullying training on November 2, 2010. Six Instructional Technology Specialists and the Coordinator of Educational Technology and Instructional Media have been trained to educate Plymouth Public

School's employees. In addition, middle school administrators attended the training. A-Train the Trainer model will be implemented to educate the staff. There will be an emphasis on the secondary schools' computer lab managers who monitor student use of computers.

5. Special Education: As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, s 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that the 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 develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. Additionally, our curriculum and programs are designed to meet the various needs of our special education students regardless of their disability. Some of the services and programs offered which help to prevent bullying are:

- I. Small-Group Instruction
- II. Social Pragmatics Instruction
- III. Life Skills
- IV. Therapeutic Classroom v.Counseling

**D. Staffing and Personal Relationship Building:** At the heart of preventing bullying is the ability of staff to develop relationships with students. "Turning Points" spoke to the importance of developing systems, which allow for such relationships.

- **Administration:** Our Administrative setup enables us to anticipate situations and develop relations with the bully/bullied in advance of negative behaviors.
- **Counselors:** At every level, counselors follow students throughout their years at their respective schools, thus enabling the counselor to develop relationships with students and families.
- **Child Study Teams:** Administrators, guidance counselors, and school psychologists meet to develop plans to help students in need of assistance and programs to improve the school.
- **Student Placement:** Students are placed in classes with consideration of the teacher and other students, they will best connect with.
- **School Resource Officer:** The two high schools have a School Resource Officer (SRO) assigned to their respective campuses. The two middle schools and the elementary schools share one School Resource Officer (SRO). Their ability to develop relationships, remain approachable, and anticipate student conflict helps to prevent bullying.

**E. Institutional Prevention:** Bullying primarily takes place in specific locations including buses, hallways, cafeteria, and recess. Our school has taken steps in order to prevent negative behaviors in these locations.

- **Location of Special Education Classrooms:** Special Education classes are located in visible, high-traffic locations as opposed to isolated locations that are typically found in schools. This sends a message to the community that all students are part of our community while also allowing staff to see any negative behaviors.
- **Security Cameras:** Some schools are monitored electronically so that accusations can be responded to and student misbehavior is deterred by the knowledge that the cameras are watching.

- **Bus Cameras:** Buses with a high number of incidents have cameras on them.
- **Hallway Supervision:** Staff members are expected to be in the hallways between classes and escorting students to/from most classes and lunch. Adult presence helps to deter bullying.
- **Cafeteria Supervision:** Administrators, teachers, counselors, and student activity monitors supervise the cafeteria and student behavior. Their presence deters misbehavior.
- **Cafeteria Seating:** School determined the number of students at a table.
- **Recess Supervision:** Paraprofessional staff members are assigned to recess duty in order to supervise student safety.
- **Bathroom Sign-in/Sign-out Process:** Each school has established procedures to supervise bathrooms.

**F. Promoting a Positive Culture:** The Plymouth Public Schools promotes a positive culture by meeting the interests of our students, inspiring their actions, and by celebrating their successes.

- I. Displaying Student Work
- II. Awards Assemblies
- III. Night Activities
- IV. PTA and HSA events

***A sample of examples offered at the Elementary Level:***

1. The Peaceful School Bus Program provides a safe, stress-free, pro-social student-centered experience.
2. Establishment of Safe Zones within the building for students to go to if they feel unsafe.
3. One-on-one mentoring programs to promote positive student/adult interactions.
4. After-school special interest programs such as athletics, board games, arts & crafts, knitting, robotics.
5. Peace Patrol Student monitors for lunch recess issues.
6. "Bucket Filler" bulletin boards that promote respectful behavior among students.
7. Weekly award assemblies.
8. Pro-social cultural arts programs sponsored by PTA/PTO.
9. Student-centered bulletin boards/murals.
10. Big friend/ little friend grade level pairings of students for weekly activities.
11. Posters/banners on display that reinforce pro-social skills and bullying prevention.

***A sample of examples offered at the Middle School Level:***

1. Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center Assemblies: Train-the-Trainer Leadership Model.
2. Internet Safety and Cyber Bullying Assemblies.
3. Character Awards.
4. SRO Junior Police Academy.
5. SRO Classroom Visits.
6. Health Curriculum.
7. Anti-Bullying Assemblies.
8. Multiple Principal's Assembly
9. Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) Student Assemblies.
10. Ryan's Story Presentation.
11. Mark Brown Assemblies
12. Participation in Teaching Tolerance Month.
13. No Name-Calling Week Activities.

14. Participation in National Mix-it-Up Day.
15. Student Leadership Groups.
16. Student Ambassadors.
17. Student Council.
18. Falcon Pride Student Leadership Group.
19. National Junior Honor Society
20. Positive Girls Group.

***A sample of examples offered at the High School Level:***

1. Rachel's Challenge Program.
2. Leadership Conferences (MIAA, MSSAA).
3. Advisor-Advisee Program.
4. General Administrator Assemblies.
5. Adjustment Counselor/SRO Classroom Visits.
6. SRO Visibility.
7. PRIDE Group- Peace, Respect, Integrity, Diversity, and Equality.
8. Health Curriculum.
9. MA Interscholastic Athletic Association Leadership Conference.
10. Athletic Captain's Breakfast and Council.
11. Assemblies with grade-level building administrators.
12. Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)
13. Adjustment counselor and SRO speak in 9th-grade academy classes.
14. White Ribbon Campaign.
15. Student Leadership Groups:
  - Student Council
  - National Honor Society
  - Principal's Breakfast Club
  - Interact

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

**REPORTING BULLYING OR RETALIATION:**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, and/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 he/she 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 (see below; 2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others). The Plymouth Public Schools will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Report Form.

***Mail the Incident Report Forms to the Building Principal***

***Email to the Building Principal as well.***

Use of an Incident Report Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The Plymouth Public Schools will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Report Form in the Parent Handbook for students, parents, and guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office; and 3) post it on the district's website.

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 through the use of Teacher and Parent Handbooks. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal, will be incorporated in Student and Staff Handbooks, on the school and district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

#### **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 the Plymouth Public Schools' district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

#### **REPORTING BY STUDENTS, PARENTS OR GUARDIANS, AND OTHERS:**

The Plymouth Public Schools 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.

#### **REPORTING BULLYING OR RETALIATION:**

1. **Safety:** Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or his/her 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 are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; predetermining seating arrangements for the target and/or aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who is a "trusted adult" 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 to protect a student who has reported bullying or retaliation; who has witnessed bullying or retaliation; who provides information during an investigation; or who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

## **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 the incident, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to an investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations of 603 CMR 49.00.
- 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 education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify, by telephone, the principal(s) or designee(s) of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communication will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations of 603 CMR 49.00.
- 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 or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. In addition, 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 or designee will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

## **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 the 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's guidance staff, as appropriate. To the extent practical, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigation 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 the Plymouth Public Schools' policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

## **DETERMINATIONS**

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after the investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will:

- a. *determine what remedial action is required, if any, and determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.***

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s) and/or the adjustment counselor, and the targets 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 notices to parents must comply with 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 another directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

## **RESPONSES TO BULLYING:**

### **1 Teaching Appropriate Behavior through Skills-Building**

If the principal or designee determines 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, s 370(d) (v).

- a. Skill-building approaches the principal or designee will consider:
- b. Offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the Plymouth Public Schools' anti-bullying curricula
- c. Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with the guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel
- d. Implementing a range of academic and non-academic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals
- e. Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home
- f. Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills  
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 the Plymouth Public Schools' Discipline policy as described in the Parent Handbook.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Reform Act (IDEA), which should be looked at 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.

## **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.

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.

## **COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES**

- A. Parent Education and Resources: The Plymouth Public Schools will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula being used by the school or district. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC), the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, Plymouth Family Network, Parent Teacher Association, Parent Teacher Organization, Plymouth Youth Development Collaborative, School Council, School Health Advisory Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and/or similar organizations.

Emotional intelligence, self-management, and social skills provide a base for positive values and responsible actions. Decision-making, emotion management, and communication skills help students to act on good intentions safely and effectively. The PPS will promote the transfer of this learning to authentic situations.

- a. Steps to Respect Family Overview Session includes training topics for students and strategies for skill reinforcement at home and the dynamics of bullying behavior.
- b. Second Step for Families is a pro-social skills training program for parents/guardians with skill reinforcement for building the language of social competency, impulse control, decision-making, and emotion management.
- c. Family Takes Home letters from the Second Step curriculum-quarterly.
- d. District Attorney Presentations regarding Cyber Safety.
- e. Parent information nights for an overview of Massachusetts Bullying Prevention Law/Curriculum.



**B Notification Requirements:** Each year the Plymouth Public 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 cyber-bullying and online safety. The school district will send parents written notice each year through the Student Handbook about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and Internet safety policy. All notices and information will be available in hard copy and electronic formats and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The district will also post the Plan and related information on the district website. Family involvement plays a key role in helping students succeed in school and in building a sense of pride in the school community. The PPS is committed to building strong partnerships among home, school, and community.

1. Posting of the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention Plan on the PPS website.
2. PPS Student Handbook student/parent signoff sheet that both parent and student have read and agree to abide by the policies and Code of Conduct set forth therein.
3. PPS Student Handbook student/parent signoff sheet for Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

### **PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (b) and describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying. Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited:

1. 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
2. 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.
3. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited. As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the District to staff any non-school-related activities, functions, or programs.

### **DEFINITIONS**

*The following definitions are directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d), as amended **Section 37O:***

"Bullying", the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in

reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

***For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.***

"Cyberbullying", 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 (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) 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 (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

***"Department"***, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

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

***"Plan"***, Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan established pursuant to subsection (d).

***Aggressor ('Perpetrator)***, a student or a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages in bullying or retaliation.

***"School District"***, the school department of a city or town, a regional school district, or a county agricultural school.

***"School Grounds"***, property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school, or collaborative school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

***Target (Victim)***, a student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

***(b) Bullying shall be prohibited:*** (i) on school grounds, the property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus, or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school-related activities, functions, or programs.

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

(c) Each school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the curriculum of the school district or school. The curriculum shall be evidence-based.

(d) (1) Each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall develop, adhere to and update a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The plan shall apply to students and members of school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals. The consultation shall include, but not be limited to, notice and a public comment period; provided, however, that a non-public school shall only be required to give notice to and provide a comment period for families that have a child attending the school. The plan shall be updated at least biennially.

(2) Each plan shall include, but not be limited to: **(i)** descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation, including procedures for collecting, maintaining and reporting bullying incident data required under subsection **(k)**; **(ii)** clear procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians and others to report bullying or retaliation; **(iii)** a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report; **(iv)** clear procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation; **(v)** the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation; provided, however, that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior; **(vi)** clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection; **(vii)** strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about an act of bullying; **(viii)** procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator; provided, that the parents or guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and provided, further, that the procedures shall provide for immediate notification pursuant to regulations promulgated under this subsection by the principal or person who holds a comparable role to the local law enforcement agency when criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator; **(ix)** a provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action; and **(x)** a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators and victims and for appropriate family members of said students. The plan shall afford all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

(3) Each plan shall recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics. The plan shall include the specific steps that each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment. A school district, charter school,

non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school may establish separate discrimination or harassment policies that include additional categories of students. Nothing in this section shall alter the obligations of a school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school, or collaborative school to remediate any discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law.

- (4) The plan for a school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall include a provision for ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities and paraprofessionals, to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to **(i)** developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; **(ii)** developmentally 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 a perpetrator, victim, and witnesses to the bullying; **(iv)** research findings on bullying, including information about 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. The department shall identify and offer information on alternative methods for fulfilling the professional development requirements of this section, at least 1 of these alternative methods shall be available at no cost to school districts, charter schools, approved private day or residential schools, and collaborative schools.
  
- (5) The plan shall include provisions for informing parents and guardians about the bullying prevention curriculum of the school district or school and shall include, but not be limited to: **(i)** how parents and guardians can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school district or school plan; **(ii)** the dynamics of bullying; and **(iii)** online safety and cyber-bullying.
  
- (6) The department shall promulgate rules and regulations on the requirements related to a principal's duties under clause **(viii)** of the second paragraph of this subsection; provided, however, that school districts, charter schools, approved private day or residential schools and collaborative schools shall be subject to the regulations. A non-public school shall develop procedures for immediate notification by the principal or person who holds a comparable role to the local law enforcement agency when criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator.
  - (e) (1) Each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall provide to students and parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms and in the languages, which are most prevalent among the students, parents, or guardians, annual written notice of the relevant student-related sections of the plan.
  - (2) Each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall provide to all school staff annual written notice of the plan. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the plan applicable to the school. Relevant sections of the plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in a school district or school employee handbook.
  - (3) The plan shall be posted on the website of each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school, and collaborative school.

- (f) Each school principal or the person who holds a comparable position shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan at his school.
- (g) A member of school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the principal or to the school official identified in the plan as responsible for receiving such reports or both. Upon receipt of such a report, the school principal or a designee shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the school principal or designee shall (i) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator; (ii) take appropriate disciplinary action; (iii) notify the parents or guardians of a perpetrator; (iv) notify the parents or guardians of the victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and (v) inform the parents or guardians of the victim about the department's problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system.
- (h) If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action. If an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the school district or school informed of the bullying or retaliation shall contact law enforcement consistent with the provisions of clause (viii) of the second paragraph of subsection (d).
- (i) Nothing in this section shall supersede or replace existing rights or remedies under any other general or special law, nor shall this section create a private right of action.
- (j) The department, after consultation with the department of public health, the department of mental health, the attorney general, the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association, and experts on bullying shall: (i) publish a model plan for school districts and schools to consider when creating their plans; and (ii) compile a list of bullying prevention and intervention resources, evidence-based curricula, best practices and academic-based research that shall be made available to schools. The model plan shall be consistent with the behavioral health and public schools framework developed by the department in accordance with section 19 of chapter 321 of the acts of 2008. The resources may include, but shall not be limited to, print, audio, video, or digital media; subscription-based online services; and on-site or technology-enabled professional development and training sessions. The department shall biennially update the model plan and the list of the resources, curricula, best practices, and research and shall post them on its website.
- (k) Each school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall annually report bullying incident data to the department. The data shall include, but not be limited to (i) the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation; (ii) the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying or retaliation; (iii) the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation; and (iv) any other information required by the department. Said incident data shall be reported in the form and manner established by the department, in consultation with the attorney general; provided, that the

department shall minimize the costs and resources needed to comply with said reporting requirements; and provided further, that the department may use existing data collection and reporting mechanisms to collect the information from school districts. The department shall analyze the bullying incident data and shall publish an annual report containing aggregate statewide information on the frequency and nature of bullying in schools. The department shall file the annual report with the attorney general and with the clerks of the Senate and the House of Representatives who shall forward the same to the chairs of the joint education committee, the joint committee on the judiciary, and the house and senate committees on ways and means.

- (l) The department shall develop a student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in schools. The survey shall be administered by each school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school, and collaborative school at least once every 4 years. The survey shall be designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation by students.

The school official identified in the plan as responsible for receiving reports of bullying or retaliation shall verify the completion of the student surveys. All completed surveys shall be forwarded to the department. The department shall use the survey results to help assess the effectiveness of bullying prevention curricula and instruction developed and administered under subsection (c). The department shall collect and analyze the student survey data in order to compare the survey results with the bullying incident data reported under subsection (k); identify long-term trends and areas of improvement, and monitor bullying prevention efforts in schools over time. The department shall make its findings available to the school official.

- (m) Each school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school may adopt an anti-bullying seal to represent the district or school's commitment to bullying prevention and intervention.
- (n) The department may investigate certain alleged incidents of bullying. If upon completion of investigation by the department, a school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school, or collaborative school is found to not have properly implemented its prevention plan as outlined in subsection (d), the department may require that school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school to properly implement the plan or take other actions to address the findings of the investigation.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the District, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege, and courses of study of such public school because of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the District from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

### **PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM**

Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v): The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department's problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system.

This information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats: Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

**APPENDIX A:**

Sample Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form

Bullying/Harassment Report – Administrative Response Form

Plymouth Public Schools Anti-Bullying Policy

Internet Safety Plan

Student Internet Safety and Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Memorandum of Understanding between the Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department





Possible Bystander: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Possible Bystander: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible Bystander: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Possible Bystander: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student acknowledgment of school's process and policy regarding bullying/harassment reporting and investigation:**

- I have been encouraged and directed to communicate any future bullying/harassment/discrimination incidents to my Guidance Counselor, Principal, or Designee via any means with which I am able or comfortable (i.e., office visit, email, voicemail, note, asking a parent to call on my behalf, etc.).
- All information I have reported and that is recorded on this form, and on any attachments to this form, is accurate and truthful to the best of my knowledge.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE BULLYING/HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION REPORT – ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE FORM

Name of Individual Making Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check: \_\_\_\_\_ student \_\_\_\_\_ parent \_\_\_\_\_ staff member \_\_\_\_\_ other

Potential Target(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

Potential Aggressor(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

Administrator/Counselor taking report:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian Notified (Target):

Who: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Please circle: *Phone* *Email* *Letter*

Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian Notified (Aggressor):

Who: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Please circle: *Phone* *Email* *Letter*

Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Police Notified:

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Officer who took report:

Summary of Incident (written by administrator):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Finding of Fact determined after an investigation by Administrator:**

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***White Copy – File***

***Yellow Copy - Counselor***

*Bullying is defined as behavior toward another person that is intentional, repetitive, and hurtful resulting in the imbalance of power between the bully and the target. It is further defined as unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing words or gestures, by an adult or student, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause long term damage; cause discomfort or humiliation, or unreasonably interfere with the individual’s school performance or participation, is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.*

## **PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY (NEW POLICY)**

The Plymouth Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

### **1.0 Definitions**

- 1.1 **"Bullying"** is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members 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 themselves, or of damage to their 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.
- 1.2 **"Cyber-bullying"** means 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 the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

- 1.3 Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents/guardians and families are expected.
- 1.4 For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

### **2.0 Prohibition against Bullying**

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district;

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

### **3.0 Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Superintendent and/or their designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

### **4.0 Reporting**

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying may be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

### **5.0 Investigation Procedures**

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a report which, if true, would constitute bullying as defined by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school Principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying in accordance with the Plymouth Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

### **6.0 Retaliation**

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

### **7.0 Training and Assessment**

Annual training shall be provided for school employees in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying in accordance with the Plymouth Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

## **LEGAL REFERENCES:**

Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended  
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission  
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972  
603 CMR [26:00](#)  
M.G.L. [71:37O](#); [265:43](#), [43A](#); [268:13B](#); [269:14A](#)

### **INTERNET SAFETY PLAN**

Plymouth Public Schools provides Internet access for educational purposes for their students, ensuring that students develop global communication and 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills.

Plymouth Public Schools filters the Internet in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Student use of the network, associated Plymouth Public Schools' technology devices, and Plymouth Public Schools applications, programs, or accounts is restricted to educational purposes only. Personal electronic devices are subject to the same restrictions.

### **STUDENT INTERNET SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)**

#### **1.0 Scope of Acceptable Use Policy**

- 1.1 This policy and all Plymouth Public Schools technology policies, guidelines, and rules refer to all computing and electronic devices (including but not limited to: computers, mobile web-enabled devices, Chromebooks, iPads, MP3 players, portable memory storage devices, calculators with interfacing capability, cell phones, digital cameras, etc.) peripheral devices (including but not limited to devices for printing, storing, duplicating and receiving information), technology infrastructure, and/or software.
- 1.2 Further, this policy and all Plymouth Public Schools technology policies, guidelines, and rules apply to any and all computing or electronic communication devices owned by, leased by, in the possession of, or being used by students and/or staff that is operated on the grounds of any district facility or connected to any equipment at any district facility by means of web connection, direct connection, or any other type of connection.
- 1.3 This policy and all Plymouth Public Schools technology policies, guidelines, and rules apply to all computing, network access, and network infrastructure, regardless of whether it is accessed from school or off-campus and regardless of whether it is accessed during or after school hours.
- 1.4 This policy and the Acceptable Use Policy Agreement also applies to any online service provided directly or indirectly by the Plymouth Public Schools for student and/or staff use, including but not limited to: Google Apps for Education accounts, Email, Calendar, and Aspen.
- 1.5 The privilege of using Plymouth Public Schools technology resources is not transferable or extendable by students to people and/or to groups outside the district and terminates when a student is no longer enrolled in Plymouth Public Schools.
- 1.6 Due to the changing nature of information technology, not all circumstances may be anticipated or addressed in this policy and the associated Acceptable Use Agreement. All users are expected to comply with both this policy as written and the spirit of this policy and show good judgment in their use of technology resources.

#### **2.0 District Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The Coordinator of Educational Technology and Instructional Media (CETIM) and the Technology Systems Engineer or their designee(s) will oversee access to the network and will

establish processes for the following: individual and/or class accounts, authorization for software installation; back-up and archiving of databases; virus protection; and compliance with filtering laws and regulations.

- 2.2 The Principal or designee will maintain signed user agreements, and be responsible for enforcing the Technology AUP.
- 2.3 When using the internet for class activities, teachers will make every attempt to preview and select material appropriate to the students and relevant to the course objectives. Teachers will provide guidelines and resources to assist their students in developing the necessary critical thinking skills to access online information.

### **3.0 Access to the System**

- 3.1 The Technology AUP will govern all utilization of the network. Student use of the system will also be governed by applicable sections of the Plymouth School Committee Policy Handbook and the Student Handbook.
- 3.2 Parents/Guardians may specifically request that their children not be provided such access by checking the appropriate box on the signature page of the AUP Agreement and returning it to their child's school. Upon receipt of that form, Plymouth Public Schools will make its best effort to restrict all internet access.
- 3.3 The internet will be for educational purposes only. Students will be educated about appropriate internet and technology behaviors, including cyberbullying awareness and response. Furthermore, accessing, knowingly and willingly causing, or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system is prohibited (see Plymouth Public Schools Anti-Bullying Policy 6.15).

### **4.0 District Limitation of Liability**

- 4.1 Plymouth Public Schools makes no guarantees of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through its network, network infrastructure, or district-owned or leased devices will be error-free or without defect. The district will not be responsible for any damages users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service caused by any reason, or personal physical, psychological, or monetary damages.
- 4.2 The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The district will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations arising through the use of the system. Parents or guardians agree to accept financial responsibility for any expenses or damages incurred as a result of their student's inappropriate, prohibited, or illegal activities on the Plymouth Public Schools network, and the Plymouth Public Schools will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the use of technology, including but not limited to the district's network.
- 4.3 Parents and guardians agree to reimburse the Plymouth Public Schools for any expenses or damages incurred in the use of district-owned or -leased devices such as Chromebooks, mobile electronic devices, or other devices provided to the student.

### **5.0 Due Process**

- 5.1 When using the network, the user agrees to take full responsibility for his or her actions. The Plymouth Public Schools will not be held liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the internet through this network. Therefore, all users shall assume full liability, legal, financial, or otherwise, for their use of the network.

- 5.2 Violations of the Technology AUP could result in the immediate suspension of the user's privileges, suspension, and/or expulsion. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Administration of the Plymouth Public Schools and/or Town, County, State, or Federal authorities.
- 5.3 Any questions or allegations concerning adherence to the Technology AUP should be brought to the attention of the CEITM.

## **6.0 Monitoring and Privacy**

- 6.1 The network is the property of the school department and its storage systems are therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time. System users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files stored on or accessed through the network. Records of electronic device use may be subject to public records law and may be discoverable in criminal or civil proceedings.
- 6.2 All Plymouth Public Schools email and files, either downloaded or copied from the Plymouth Public Schools system, that is accessed through a user's home computer or any other non-Plymouth Public Schools computer or device, are Plymouth Public Schools' property and should be used and protected according to this policy and other applicable policies and laws governing information confidentiality and security.
- 6.3 An individual search will be conducted if there is suspicion that a user has violated the AUP, the law, or the disciplinary code. The nature of the investigation will be in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.
- 6.4 Technicians and computer system administrators maintain full access rights to all storage devices and may need to access/manage such storage devices as part of their duties.
- 6.5 The Plymouth Public Schools prohibits the use of camera and audio recording functions on any equipment, including but not limited to personal cameras, personal camera telephones, and/or school-issued devices, at school or school-sponsored events, except when specifically authorized by school administration or staff and with knowledge and consent of the participants. In no event should any photographs or video be taken of confidential information, nor should photographs, audio, or video recordings be made without knowledge of the subjects. Audio recording without the consent of the individuals recorded may result in criminal felony charges. M.G.L. c. 272 § 99.

## **7.0 Unacceptable Use**

The user of any Plymouth Public Schools network, Plymouth Public Schools owned or leased electronic device, or any personal electronic device connected to the Plymouth Public Schools network is expected to abide by this policy, along with the Code of Conduct and rules set forth in the Student Handbook. The user will not use the Plymouth Public Schools network, Plymouth Public Schools owned or leased electronic device, or any personal electronic device connected to the Plymouth Public Schools network for any unacceptable purpose including, but not limited to:

- using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
- engaging in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization or posting information that could cause damage or disruption; this includes, but is not limited to, the posting of broadcast messages or other actions that cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.



- installing or downloading unauthorized software, applications, extensions, routers, or joining listservs or newsgroups without expressed permission of instructional staff.
- attempting to go beyond his or her authorized access, making deliberate attempts to disrupt system performance or destroy data (by spreading computer viruses or by any other means), or engaging in other illegal activities.
- disseminating passwords, codes, access telephone numbers, or account numbers to unauthorized persons.
- using the network to access or send material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography), advocates illegal acts, or advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (e.g., hate literature).
- changing in any way the configuration of a computer or network without permission of instructional staff.
- engaging in plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty.
- damaging or vandalizing computers, computer systems, or networks.
- trespassing in other's folders, work, or files or using another's password.
- using computers/internet to play non-educational games or other non-academic activities.
- participating in any type of teleconferencing or chat without permission of instructional staff.
- using e-mail without instructional staff permission/supervision.
- The network may not be used for personal and commercial purposes, such as, but not limited to, offering or purchasing goods and/or services for personal use.
- Engaging in electronic forgery, credit card fraud, or other illegal behavior.

## 8.0 Safety

The safety of the internet user is of utmost concern. Users should never provide personal information about themselves or anyone else. Users will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without parent/guardian approval and participation. Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employees any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

## 9.0 Web Publishing

The Plymouth Public Schools website is designed to provide a portal to enable communication among teachers, students, staff, administration, and the community, both local and global. Material posted on the District's website must reflect the high educational standards of the Plymouth Public Schools.

***To ensure the safety of our students and the accuracy and security of district information the guidelines and procedures listed below must be followed:***

- 9.1 No student's personal information, such as SIMS (Student Information Management Systems) data, last name, home address, and telephone number may be posted on the website. Students must submit a signed permission form from their parent/guardian granting permission to post the student's work or picture.

- 9.2 Requests to post material on the Plymouth Public Schools' Web site must have prior approval of the Principal or designee.
- 9.3 Student directory information may not be published.
- 9.4 The creator of a home page on the District's network is responsible for ensuring that the information contained therein is of the highest editorial standards (spelling, punctuation, grammar, style, etc.). The information should be factually accurate and current. If errors are observed, the CETIM or designated school page editor should be contacted to make the necessary corrections.

***\* It should be noted that the Plymouth Public Schools name or logo may not be used on a personal web page without the permission of the Superintendent.***

## **10.0 Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

Existing copyright law will govern the use of material accessed through the network. The user will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours. All copyrighted material used must have the express written permission or appropriate citation of the person or organization that owns the copyright. Plymouth Public Schools will cooperate with copyright protection agencies investigating copyright infringement by users of the computer systems and network of the Plymouth Public Schools.

## **11.0 Use of Plymouth Public Schools Owned or Leased Devices**

- 11.1 Plymouth Public Schools may provide a 1:1 electronic device (such as a Chromebook) to students through a 1:1 electronic device initiative to promote equitable access to technology, enhance the Plymouth Public Schools learning environment, and allow for seamless integration of technology under the direction of the school staff.
- 11.2 Use of a 1:1 device requires Parent/Guardian (and Students over 18) agreement to the terms of the Plymouth Public Schools' Loan of Technology Agreement, this Acceptable Use Policy and Associated Agreement, the 1:1 Chromebook Handbook for Students and Families, and the Plymouth Public Schools Student Handbook.
  - 11.2.1 All devices and accessories remain the property of the Plymouth Public Schools. Any information accessed through the Plymouth Public Schools network or on a Plymouth Public Schools device may be monitored and/or reviewed by Plymouth Public Schools. All files stored on the student's loaned device or in the student's Plymouth Public Schools account are subject to individual review and monitoring.
  - 11.2.2 Students may only log in under their assigned username. Students may not share their passwords or login information with any other student.
  - 11.2.3 Parent supervision of the use of 1:1 devices and regular communication with school staff is strongly encouraged. While Plymouth Public Schools filters the content accessible to students, the ability to filter all internet content is not perfect. Parents are encouraged to supervise device usage during non-school hours given the 24/7 availability of the 1:1 device.
- 11.3 Devices that malfunction, are lost, stolen, or otherwise require repair must be reported immediately to the school Building Technology Designee.

## **12.0 Use of Personal Electronic Devices (Bring Your Own Device)**

- 12.1.1 Students may be permitted to utilize their own mobile electronic device at school and during school-related educational activities to assist and enhance their learning experiences, subject to the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy and the Procedures and Rules established by each building Principal. Each school's administrative team may set forth rules and guidelines to fit the needs of the school learning community, however, any changes may not supersede the guidelines set forth in this School Committee Acceptable Use Policy.
- 12.1.2 Student use of personal electronic devices is a privilege that may be taken away by school personnel.
- 12.1.3 Only the network connection provided by the Plymouth Public Schools may be accessed from a Student's personal device while on campus.
- 12.1.4 Plymouth Public Schools is not responsible for the security or maintenance of students' personal electronic devices.

### **13.0 Remote Learning and Acceptable Use**

- 13.1.1 During periods of remote learning, as necessitated by public health concerns, emergency orders, or any other reason deemed necessary by the Superintendent, students must continue to abide by the Plymouth Public Schools' Code of Conduct, Rules, and this Acceptable Use Policy.
- 13.2 By participating in remote learning, the parent/guardian understands and agrees that their child's image and voice may be transmitted over the internet and that the Plymouth Public Schools cannot guarantee or warrant confidentiality of such. Students' voices/images may be heard/viewed by school staff members conducting or supervising remote/online services, other students participating in their remote learning cohort, and by any other individuals who may be present in the location in which another student is participating in the remote/online service.
- 13.3 Unauthorized recording by a parent or student of remote/online services provided by or through the Plymouth Public Schools and/or the dissemination of such recording is a violation of this policy, Plymouth Public Schools school, rules, and may result in a referral to law enforcement authorities and the potential issuance of criminal charges.

### **14.0 Modification of this Policy**

The Plymouth Public Schools School Committee reserves the right to modify or change this policy and related implementation procedures at any time.

### **15.0 Student Technology AUP Access Agreement**

Your signature on this document is legally binding and indicates that you have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance and consequences. This policy is further supported by the rules and regulations found in each school's student handbook and discipline policies.

**STUDENT TECHNOLOGY AUP ACCESS AGREEMENT**

**PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY SIGNATURE PAGE**

**STUDENT SECTION** (Must be signed by students in grades six and above.)

**Student Name (print):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Technology AUP. I agree to follow the rules contained in this policy. I understand that if I violate the rules my access can be terminated and I may face other disciplinary measures.

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/ GUARDIAN SECTION**

**(The following section must be signed by a parent or guardian unless the student is over 18 years of age.)**

I have read the Technology AUP. I hereby release the Plymouth Public Schools, its personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the Plymouth Public Schools network, including, but not limited to, claims that may arise from the unauthorized use of the system to purchase products or services.

I will instruct my child regarding any restrictions against accessing material that is in addition to the restrictions set forth in the Technology AUP. I will emphasize to my child the importance of following the rules for personal safety.

I give permission for my child to access the Internet and certify that the information contained in this form is correct.

I **DO NOT** WISH FOR MY CHILD TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET.

Parent/Guardian Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, BETWEEN PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PLYMOUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department agree to coordinate their efforts to intervene and prevent violence involving the students of the Plymouth Public Schools, to prevent the improper and/or illegal use, abuse, and distribution of alcohol and other illegal drugs involving the students of Plymouth Public Schools and to promote a safe and nurturing environment in the school community.

We agree to effectively and cooperatively respond to and address, for everyone's protection, school delinquency, criminal behavior, and other activity detrimental to the welfare of the school community. The joint and cooperative response efforts will focus on incidents that take place on school grounds, within school property, at school-sponsored events, and other locations in which students of the Plymouth Public Schools are involved.

We also agree to keep all information which is necessarily disclosed between the parties pursuant to M.G.L. c. 12 § 32; M.G.L. c. 71 § 37H1/2; M.G.L. c. 71 § 37L; 603 CMR 23; and 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, from public dissemination in accordance with State and Federal Laws

This agreement is intended to address issues of violence; attempted violence or threatened violence; the use, abuse, and/or distribution of alcohol or other drugs; or other incidents of conduct possibly detrimental to the welfare of the school community, where a law enforcement response is likely helpful or required:

- in a school setting
- during any school-sponsored activity, even if the event is off school grounds; or
- in the community involving students of the Plymouth Public Schools.

It will be the sole prerogative of school officials to impose discipline for infractions of school rules and policies. See the **school handbook** for specific policies and procedures.

**SCHOOL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT DESIGNATED LIAISONS**

In order to facilitate prompt and clear communications between the school and police personnel, the Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department agree to identify individuals on their respective staffs who will function as "Designated Liaisons". These representatives shall serve as conduits between the school system and the police department for matters related to the school system and students.

***THE PLYMOUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS DESIGNATED LIAISONS AT THE***

**FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:**

Plymouth North High School  
Plymouth South High School)  
Plymouth South Middle School  
Plymouth Community Intermediate School

**CHIEF OF POLICE** (Supervisor of School Resource Officers)

\*First contact to be made to designated School Resource Officer.

\* If unavailable, contact should be made with the on-duty Shift Commander.

The aforementioned police department designated liaisons are also considered the Plymouth School District's "Law Enforcement Unit" as defined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

(20 U.S.C. § 1232g) for purposes of sharing information between the Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department regarding students.

**PROCESS FOR SELECTING SRO's:**

In accordance with G.L. c. 71, § 37P, the Plymouth Police Department shall select SROs who will foster an optimal learning environment and educational community. The selection of each SRO remains within the discretion of the Chief of Police, who shall consult with and give due weight to the opinions of the Superintendent of Schools and/or building principals in selecting an SRO. The appointment(s) shall not be based solely on seniority; rather, preference will be given to officers who demonstrate the requisite personality, character, skills, and interest to work in a school environment with children and educators and who have received specialized training related to working with children and adolescents, including cognitive development, de-escalation techniques, and alternatives to arrest and diversion strategies.

Other factors for consideration in selecting an SRO include:

- Ability to work effectively with students within the age range at the assigned school(s).
- Familiarity with the cultural descriptors that make up the community's worldviews, including race, age, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, culture, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, immigration status, primary language, and English proficiency, socioeconomic status, educational level, and occupation.
- A commitment to making all students and the school community feel welcomed, valued, respected, and acknowledged regardless of cultural descriptors.
- Knowledge of school-based legal issues.
- Commitment to protecting students' legal and civil rights.
- Knowledge of school and community resources.
- An understanding of crime prevention problem solving and community policing in a school setting.
- Public speaking and teaching skills.
- Knowledge of school safety planning and technology.

The Superintendent of the Plymouth Public Schools retains the right to (1) decline the SRO appointed by the Chief of Police and (2) request the reassignment of an SRO.

**SUPERVISION OF SRO's:**

The SRO is an employee of the Plymouth Police Department and shall be subject to the administration, supervision, and control of the police department. The SRO reports directly to the POLICE CAPTAIN.

When on school grounds or at school-related events, the SRO will coordinate with school officials. The Superintendent and building principals retain all rights and control over the Plymouth Public Schools and the management of their respective students, staff, events, and property.

In the event serious allegations of wrongdoing by the SRO are raised, the SRO will be temporarily removed from having contact with students, as appropriate. If allegations of abuse or misconduct by the SRO are substantiated, the SRO will be removed from any school assignments, as appropriate. The Chief of Police and Superintendent of Schools agree to cooperate in the investigation and resolution of any such matters.

**ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE DESIGNATED LIAISONS**

**A. REPORTABLE INCIDENTS:**

- The Designated Liaisons from the Schools and Police Department will review all incidents classified as Mandatory Reportable Incidents, as defined in Section IV of this agreement.
- The Designated Liaisons for Schools and Law Enforcement will also review any incident or information that may affect the safety or well-being of students, faculty, or administrative personnel.
- Additionally, upon request from the District Attorney's Office, the Designated Liaisons for Schools and Police will provide appropriate information to the Office of the District Attorney which may be helpful in fashioning proposed terms and conditions to be imposed upon a student of the Plymouth Public Schools at both the pre-adjudication and post-adjudication stages of a proceeding within the court and criminal justice systems.

**B. PREVENTION STRATEGIES:**

***In addition to the above responsibilities, the Designated Liaisons from the School, the Police Department, and the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office will meet regularly for the following purposes:***

- to discuss the incidents of violence; any use, abuse, or distribution of alcohol and/or other drugs; criminal activity affecting students; or any other activity detrimental to the school community;
- to identify strategies to reduce such activities, and to promote a safe and nurturing school environment;
- to discuss resources available for students at risk of harm from violence, abuse, or neglect;
- to develop and be involved with prevention and intervention programs focused on anti-violence and corresponding strategies as required by M.G.L. c. 12 § 32; and
- to help outline a necessary action plan for the implementation of such strategies.

**REPORTING GUIDELINES**

**A. SCHOOL REPORTS TO POLICE DEPARTMENT**

***The following shall be considered Mandatory Reportable Incidents:***

- possession, use, sale, or distribution of alcohol and/or other drugs by a student; at any time, or by a non-student where it is a crime or affects students;
- possession, use, or distribution of an inhalant or any controlled substance, as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C;
- any incident involving the threat of assaultive behavior or intentional assaultive or negligent behavior that results in personal injury;
- possession of a weapon as defined in either M.G. L. c. 269 § 10, or the **school handbook**;
- any incident involving crimes of intolerance, including, but not limited to, serious "bullying," certain civil rights violations, domestic abuse, dating violence, or a violation of M.G.L. c. 209A order;
- any incident involving a child suffering a physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him or her which causes harm or the substantial risk of harm to the child's health

or welfare, including sexual abuse or from neglect; (in addition to a report filed with the Department of Children and Families);

- any incident involving an actual or suspected hate crime or violation of civil rights, including but not limited to an assault or battery upon a person or damage to the real or personal property of a person with the intent to intimidate such person because of such person's race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in violation of M.G.L. c. 265 § 39;
- any incident resulting in significant damage to municipal or private property;
- any bomb threat, fire, threatened or attempted fire setting, threatened or attempted use of an explosive device or hoax device. Such reports shall include but not be limited to the requirements of M.G.L. c. 148 § 2A;
- any creation or possession of a document that identifies individuals targeted for violence or death;
- any threat, direct or indirect, against a student, school personnel, or another school employee; including but not limited to threats which occur via telecommunications (e.g. internet, text message, IM);
- any incident of "hazing" as defined by M.G.L. c. 269 § 17, involving a threatened or actual risk of physical or emotional harm to a student;
- any sexual assault, rape, or incident of gender-based harassment. This shall include but not be limited to any and all policies, procedures, and reporting requirements as defined in the **student handbook**.

***Mandatory Reportable Incidents will be immediately reported to the Plymouth Police Department if such incident:***

occurred on school property or in the vicinity;

occurred at a school-sponsored function;

occurred in a school-owned or contracted bus or another vehicle; or

involved a student of the Plymouth Public Schools.

**B. THE POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL**

***The appropriate Police Department Designated Liaison will inform the appropriate School Designated Liaison, subject to applicable statutes and regulations governing confidentiality, of:***

- any activity which may be classified as a Mandatory Reportable Incident as listed in section IV. A(1) of this document;
- any arrest of a student or the filing of a complaint application or other police or court action was taken against any student of Plymouth Public Schools; if such activity is deemed a concern for the safe operation of the school.
- any occurrence involving a student of the Plymouth Public Schools, if the
- activity poses a serious and imminent threat to the safety of the student, other students, faculty, or administrative personnel;



- making of such a report would facilitate supportive intervention by school personnel on behalf of the student.

## **PROCEDURE GUIDELINES**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

A concern of educators is to provide a safe and nurturing climate in which learning can take place, as is evidenced in the student handbook. It is also a concern of local law enforcement to promote a safe environment in the public school community.

As recent events have shown, any school is at risk for incidents of violence, threatened violence, or attempted violence, as well as the use, abuse, and distribution of alcohol and other drugs, all of which diminish the ability of the school community to focus upon the business of learning. In order to promote a safe and nurturing environment in our schools and our community, it is in our common interest to share information. It is through the collaborative efforts of the Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department that this can occur.

### **B. REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

#### **Definition:**

An emergency situation is any incident that poses a threat to human safety or which may result in serious property damage. A teacher or other employee having knowledge of any emergency situation shall immediately notify or cause to be notified by both the Plymouth Police Department (911) and the School Principal or Assistant Principal. This requirement is in addition to any procedures outlined in the **student handbook**.

Where an emergency exists and there is an immediate need to avert or diffuse certain unusual conditions or disruptions in the school setting, the school will provide all necessary information to law enforcement personnel regarding the students at issue.  
(See § 99.31(a)(10) of the FERPA regulations.)

### **C. REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR NON-EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

A teacher or other school employee has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has committed an act categorized as a mandatory reportable act and that student is on school grounds, he or she shall take or cause the student to be taken to the appropriate Designated School Liaison.

### **D. NECESSARY FOLLOW-UP**

***A teacher or other school employee with knowledge of facts pertinent to the reportable act shall:***

- prepare and submit a report (see the **student handbook**) on the incident to the appropriate Designated School Liaison;
- notify the Designated School Liaison of the existence of any physical evidence; and
- take reasonable steps to maintain any pertinent physical evidence and notify the Police of existence and location.

## E. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED SCHOOL LIAISON

*Once a Designated School Liaison has been made aware of a mandatory reportable incident, it is her/his responsibility to:*

- notify the Police Department Designated Liaison and, when appropriate, parents;
- notify the Police Department Designated Liaison of the existence of pertinent physical evidence and speak with him or her about whether and how to take reasonable steps to maintain it in a secure place; and
- follow-up by forwarding any related reports (see the **student handbook**) to the Plymouth Police Department.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### A. TRAINING

The Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department agree in a collaborative effort to provide appropriate training to their respective staff to inform them of their roles and responsibilities under this agreement and to consult with the District Attorney's Office as appropriate regarding this training.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **ROLE OF THE OFFICE OF THE PLYMOUTH COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

In the spirit of the legislative mandate regarding communication between the district attorney, law enforcement, and school officials, as included in General Laws, Chapter 12, Section 32, and to assist the Plymouth Public Schools in providing a safe environment for learning, in accordance with the legislative mandate set forth in G.L. c. 71, sections 37H and 371/2H, inter alia, the Plymouth County District Attorney agrees to:

- report to the school any felony, criminal or delinquency complaint that is issued against a student of the Plymouth Public Schools;
- report to the school any adjudication of delinquency or conviction, or another significant occurrence that arises from the above;
- consult with the Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department when fashioning proposed terms and conditions to be imposed upon a student of the Plymouth Public Schools at both the pre-adjudication and post-adjudication stages of the prosecution; and
- consult with the Plymouth Public Schools and the Plymouth Police Department when deciding whether to prosecute a student as a Youthful Offender.

The Plymouth District Attorney agrees to provide training to his staff to inform them of their roles and responsibilities under this agreement. On an ongoing basis, the same training will be provided to new staff members.