

Adopted: ____ July 13, 2016 ____

Revised: _____

PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY POLICY No. 506 BULLYING PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

I. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY to define acts of bullying and to clearly delineate the consequences of bullying behavior.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Bullying or other prohibited conduct under this policy is expressly forbidden. PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY is committed to making PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY a safe and caring environment for all students. We will treat each other with respect and refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind. We will endeavor to be kind and respectful in our interactions with others.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. “Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:
1. There is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or
 2. Materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.
- B. “Cyberbullying” means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including but not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.
- C. Intimidating, threatening, abuse or harming conduct may involve, but is not limited to conduct that:
1. Causes physical harm to a student or a student’s property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property;

2. Under Minnesota common law, violates a student's reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student;
 3. Is directed at a student or students including those based on a person's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability, or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristics defined in chapter 363A. However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or chapter 363A.
- D. "Prohibited conduct" means bullying or cyberbullying as defined under this subdivision, or retaliation for asserting, alleging, reporting or providing information about such conduct or knowingly making a false report about bullying.
- E. "Remedial response" means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of the student who is the target of the prohibited conduct.

IV. THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

- A. This policy applies to school related bullying wherever it occurs, including:
1. On PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
 2. At a school activity, function, or event, including field trips and other school activities which take place off of school grounds;
 3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event; or
 4. On school computers or other equipment.
- B. Off campus student behavior, including behavior on computers, cell phones, or other electronic devices whether at home or in other places is subject to consequences under this policy if the behavior substantially disrupts or interferes with the educational process at school for one or more students.

V. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY students must not bully others, must not be a bystander to bullying, and must report bullying to an adult. Students are expected to do the following:

- A. Treat others with kindness and respect;
- B. Refuse to bully others;
- C. Refuse to let others be bullied;
- D. Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied;
- E. Try to include everyone in activities, especially those who are often left out; and
- F. Report bullying to an adult.

VI. STAFF EXPECTATIONS

Teachers and staff at PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY are expected to do the following things to prevent bullying and help children feel safe at school:

- A. Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground;
- B. Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens;
- C. Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports using an appropriate response process;
- D. Make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the prohibited conduct when the teacher or staff member witness prohibited conduct or have reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect a student is a target of prohibited conduct;
- E. Report bullying to the PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY principal;
- F. Notify the executive director when efforts to address the bullying prove unsuccessful; and
- G. Help create a school culture of respect and kindness by modeling and fostering these traits.

VII. EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY administrators are expected to foster a school culture of respect and kindness. Administrators are expected to oversee the following, at a minimum:

- A. Ensure that the topic of bullying prevention is addressed on a regular basis at staff meetings;
- B. Create a reporting and investigation procedure for reports of prohibited conduct;
- C. Identify and schedule appropriate staff training opportunities on the topic of bullying prevention;
- D. Provide appropriate training for all school personnel to prevent, identify, and respond to prohibited conduct. [SCHOOL DISTRICT] will establish a training cycle, not to exceed a period of three school years, for school personnel under this paragraph. Newly employed school personnel must receive training within the first year of their employment with the district or school.
- E. Use annual parent surveys or other appropriate methods to obtain from stakeholders input relevant to the topic of bullying prevention at PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY;
- F. Ensure that this policy is annually disseminated to all PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, on a school bus, and to off campus behavior if that behavior substantially interferes with the educational process for one or more students at school.
- G. Ensure that this policy appears on PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY's website, in the languages appearing on PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY's website.
- H. Ensure that this policy is included in the student handbook on school policies.
- I. Post a summary form of this policy conspicuously in the administrative offices of PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY and [SCHOOL DISTRICT].
- J. Make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the prohibited conduct when the administrator witnesses prohibited conduct or has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect a student is a target of prohibited conduct.
- K. Require ongoing professional development, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 122A.60, to build the skills of all school personnel who regularly interact with students to identify, prevent, and appropriately address prohibited conduct. The professional development includes, but is not limited to information about:
 - 1. Developmentally appropriate strategies both to prevent and to immediately and effectively intervene to stop prohibited conduct;
 - 2. The complex dynamics affecting an actor, target, and witnesses to prohibited conduct;

3. Research on prohibited conduct, including specific categories of students at risk for prohibited conduct in school;
4. The incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
5. Internet safety and cyberbullying.

VIII. MONITORING OF STUDENT INTERNET USE, RECORDS, AND FILES

- A. Students have a limited expectation of privacy on PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY's internet system computer, or any other electronic device owned by PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY. Students should expect routine maintenance and monitoring by staff and technical support.
- B. An individual search of internet use, a computer, or other electronic device records may be conducted by administration if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student engaged in prohibited conduct or violated PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY's policies. A search may include a student's personal computer, smartphone, or other electronic device to the extent permitted by law when there are reasonable grounds the electronic device contains evidence of prohibited conduct.

IX. REPORTING PROCEDURE

- A. Any person who believes he or she is or has been a victim of or has any knowledge of bullying or other prohibited conduct under this policy should immediately report any information they have about the bullying or other prohibited conduct to the building report taker.
- B. The building principal or the principal's designee will be the building report taker. The building report taker will be primary contact person in the school building to receive reports of prohibited conduct under this policy. The building report taker will also ensure the policy and its procedures including restorative practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented, and serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters implicating both PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY and the department of education.
- C. A report of bullying or other prohibited conduct may be anonymous. PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY, however, will not determine any discipline solely on an anonymous report.

X. PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY's ACTIONS

- A. Within three school days of the receipt of a complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct, the [SCHOOL DISTRICT] shall undertake or authorize an investigation by the building report taker or a third party designated by the school district.
- B. Reasonable steps will be taken by PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY to preserve any evidence of bullying or other prohibited conduct.
- C. Depending on the severity and nature of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY will take one or more of the following steps, as appropriate:
 - 1. Intervention, Warning, and Redirection. A teacher, principal, or staff member will ensure that the immediate behavior stops and reinforce to the student that bullying will not be tolerated. The staff member will redirect the student and may help the student identify better choices the student can make in the future.
 - 2. Notification of Parents. School staff will notify the parents of involved students and inform affected students and parents of their rights under state and federal data practices law to obtain access to data related to the incident and their right to contest the accuracy or completeness of the data. The parents may be asked to meet with the principal or other members of the school staff, including the student's teacher and/or the school counselor.
 - 3. Opportunity to Present Defense. The alleged perpetrator of the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.
 - 4. Resolution with the Target of the Bullying. A student who violates this policy may be required to participate in appropriate resolution, including restorative justice activities.
 - 5. Referral to Professional School Support Staff. A student who violates this policy may be asked to meet with a school counselor or other staff to work on positive behavioral interventions to help prevent future violations.
 - 6. Loss of School Privileges. The student may lose recess for one or more days, may lose school privileges, or be suspended, as appropriate.

7. Suspension/ Expulsion. In cases of severe or repeated bullying, the student may be suspended or expelled.
8. Staff Consequences. A PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY employee who fails to immediately and appropriately address bullying may be asked to participate in additional staff training or may be mentored. A staff member's repeated failure to address bullying behavior may result in discipline up to and including discharge, as appropriate.
9. Community Resources. PRAIRIE SEEDS ACADEMY may provide information about available community resources to the target, actor, or other affected individuals.
10. Student with a Disability. The Student's individualized education program or section 504 plan may be used to address the skills and proficiencies the student needs to respond to or not engage in the prohibited conduct.
11. If the bullying or prohibited conduct violates the law or any other school rules or policy, additional actions may be taken by [SCHOOOL NAME] against the student for the violation as appropriate.

XI. RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED

The school board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation will be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

XII. FALSE REPORTS AS A MEANS OF BULLYING PROHIBITED

The school board prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school student found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 124E.03 (Charter Schools – Applicable Law)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.0311 (Notice of the Rights & Responsibilities of Students & Parents under the Safe & Supportive Minnesota Schools Act)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)