

Holbrook Public Schools

# **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

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## I. LEADERSHIP

### A. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Holbrook Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in consultation with a variety of constituency groups, including: parents, teachers, school administrators, police officials, all School Councils, the Holbrook School Committee, the Holbrook Public Schools' Leadership Team, and the district-wide Crisis Team.

The Superintendent provided periodic updates to the Holbrook School Committee, whose meetings are broadcast to the public. The local newspaper, The Holbrook Sun, provided media coverage of these updates and Holbrook Cable Access Media-HCAM continuously replayed the Parent Night Training that was provided in the fall of 2010.

The initial draft of the plan was developed by the Junior-Senior High School Assistant Principal and building principals, and approved by the Superintendent of Schools.

As part of our initial leadership efforts in the fall of 2010, school administrators reviewed the new legal statute, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education notices, legal counsel advisory as requested on matters of clarification, and various other professional organizations with a vested interest in providing for a safe school environment.

### B. Assessing Needs and Resources

1. Programs and curricula currently in place to address bullying prevention and intervention:

➤ **John F. Kennedy Elementary School: PreK-3**

The Kennedy School participates in a positive choice program that addresses bullying. This year the Kennedy School implemented Second Step, a violence prevention curriculum, for grades K-3. The program encourages everyone to make positive choices, use caring words, demonstrate kindness, display respectful behaviors, recognize emotions, empathy, and discourages bullying.

Different Characteristics of Bullying:

- ✓ Physical – hitting, taking someone's belongings, kicking
- ✓ Verbal/Emotional – name-calling, insulting, racist remarks, spreading stories, excluding someone from a group.

Bullying is explained to the children at the Kennedy School as being:

- ✓ Deliberate, hurtful behavior that is often repeated.
- ✓ Making someone do things he or she doesn't want to do.

Every month character education addresses a different teaching component (respect, caring and sharing, friends, I Am Special, etc.) to instruct and reward children to make positive choices and not to bully. They are taught to understand how others feel so that they won't name-call or tease.

They are also taught to include everyone and to keep their hands to themselves. Activities such as role playing, games, worksheets, and reading stories will address these subjects. The Second Step Program, combined with monthly character education, creates safe and compassionate environment.

Procedures taken for reported incident of bullying:

- ✓ Everyone is encouraged (parents, children, teachers, nurses, and support staff) to identify and report bullying to the principal and counselor. If bullying is identified, the principal and counselor will interview both the victim and the bully.
- ✓ Parents are then notified.
- ✓ A plan is put in effect to terminate the bullying behavior. This involves the parents, administration, and counselor. If needed, outside legal agencies will become involved.
- ✓ The children are instructed to inform the principal or counselor if the bullying continues.

At the Kennedy School we teach our students to second step and PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Strategies) to promote a safe and nurturing environment for all our students.

➤ **South Elementary School: Grades 4-6**

South School is a Grades 4-6 public school that is meeting the needs of students in numerous ways as we try to address bullying. This includes:

- ✓ Bullying Policy Stated in Handbook
- ✓ Child Study Teams
- ✓ Faculty Meeting on Reporting Incidents
- ✓ Faculty Meeting on Decision-Making Flow-Chart in Bullying
- ✓ Mandated Reporting of Abuse and Neglect DA Presentation to Faculty
- ✓ Parent Night on Bullying Prevention (\*Held in Collaboration with the other District's Schools)

We further encourage all members of the South School Learning Community to work on building positive relationships and to develop problem solving skills through the use of the following programs:

- ✓ PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Strategies)

At South School we have created programs, brought in programs and held after school clubs aimed at fostering team spirit, kindness towards others and tolerance. These programs include:

- ✓ *Helping Hearts Program*
- ✓ *South School Salutes Our Soldiers*
- ✓ Knitting Club
- ✓ *Project Bread*
- ✓ *Faces of Homelessness*

All of the above mentioned programs and clubs help our students:

- ✓ To enhance their skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications.
- ✓ To engage in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.
- ✓ To empower themselves to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance.

➤ **Holbrook Junior-Senior High School: Grades 7-12**

Holbrook JSHS is a Grades 7-12 public school that is meeting the needs of students in numerous ways as we try to address unacceptable behavior such as bullying. This includes:

- ✓ Bullying Policy Stated in Handbook
- ✓ Student Study Team
- ✓ Faculty Meeting on Reporting Incidents
- ✓ Faculty Meeting on Decision-Making Flow-Chart in Bullying
- ✓ Mandated Reporting of Abuse and Neglect DA Presentation to Faculty
- ✓ Parent Night on Bullying Prevention at School
- ✓ Reporting Form Clearly Marked Upon Entrance of School

We are also encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students through our Student Advisories/Homerooms. In the Student Advisory/Homerooms mini-lessons based on “Courage to Be Yourself Program” and “Educators for Social Responsibility Advisory Program” where students complete the following program goals:

- ✓ To help students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance

- ✓ To enhance students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications.
- ✓ To engage students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.
- ✓ To empower 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.

Lesson Topics & Teambuilding include:

- A.) Self-Assessment Survey
- B.) Goal Setting
- C.) We All Belong to Groups
- D.) A Stranger in a Strange School
- E.) How Do We Experience Conflict?
- F.) Resisting Conformity
- G.) The Power of Cliques
- H.) Overcoming Preconceptions and Stereotypes
- I.) Letting Go of Labels
- J.) What is Harassment?
- K.) Acceptance in your life.
- L.) Interrupting Bullying & Harassment
- M.) Types of Peer Pressure
- N.) Understanding Power – Who Has It? Who Doesn't?
- O.) All About Anger.
- P.) Interrupting & Stopping Verbal Abuse
- Q.) From Being a Bystander to Taking a Stand.
- R.) Introduction to Mediation
- S.) Making a Difference

The JSBS curriculum also includes the following school day and extended day programs:

- ✓ Peer Mediation Program:
- ✓ Project Strive Program:
- ✓ Compass Program:
- ✓ Peer Focus Groups with Adjustment Counselor

- ✓ MIAA Teamwork Workshops
- ✓ MIAA Student Leadership Workshops
- ✓ District Attorney's Boys' Group
- ✓ District Attorney's Cyberbullying Workshops
- ✓ Holbrook Police Department Internet Safety Workshops
- ✓ Individual Counseling
- ✓ Social Skills Group
- ✓ Positive Action in Health Classes Grades 7-8
- ✓ Boys Group
- ✓ Healthy Relationships Workshop
- ✓ Peer Mediation
- ✓ Yellow Dress Play
- ✓ White Ribbon Campaign

**2. Current policies and procedures.**

In the spring of 2017, the School Committee revised Interim Policy JICFB Bullying Prevention based on the recommendations from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

**3. Data on bullying and behavioral incidents.**

Data on all behavioral incidents are collected at the building level by principals/assistant principals and guidance counselors, and organized records are maintained in each school.

Our goal is to develop a more effective process that will allow us to examine the data at the district level in order to guide our discussions and develop targeted action plans.

**4. Available behavioral health services.**

The Holbrook Public Schools' Crisis Team includes school psychologists, guidance counselors, adjustment counselors, social workers, administrators, and school nurses at all levels who provide support services to students in need. This comprehensive model allows the team to provide in-class supports to students in the regular classroom; consultation to teachers; progress monitoring; and intensive interventions for students with longer-term social, emotional, or behavioral needs.

**5. Areas of need and future priorities include:**

**a. Data-driven reporting and investigation procedures**

The administration developed a flow chart and reporting form that has been approved by the Leadership Team and School Committee that is currently in use.

The flow chart begins with the incident being observed by the adult, or reported to the adult by a student. The flow chart continues by bulleting important points of the investigation and steps to follow. The flow chart then identifies the time frame to create action plans, documentation, and consequences if needed.

An incident reporting form was also created to document each incident and subsequent investigation. An Action Plan is part of this form, as is a Parent Communication Form.

These new reporting forms will help the district collect better data about incidents related to bullying and harassment. The current form includes a record of the alleged aggressor, but not the target. The new confidential form includes the name of the target as well, which will help each school track possible patterns of incidents involving a single target, which was not always possible before.

School principals are in the process of training their school staff on the use of these new forms, which will be reviewed at the end of the school year to determine if changes should be made.

**b. Collecting accurate data about the extent of the problem in Holbrook Schools.**

The district intends to administer a comprehensive survey to all Junior-Senior High School students this year regarding their experience with bullying/harassment and how safe they view their school and community environment. This will provide the baseline and measures from year to year to document the extent of the problems that we face and to help determine the effectiveness of programs put in place.

The JSHS administration in collaboration with the Guidance Team will select the appropriate survey to be completed by students prior to the end of the school year.

**c. Education and awareness of students.**

Through our needs assessment, the district determined that we have many research-based programs in place to address this important issue. We also determined that the programs work well together to provide a comprehensive approach to developing social competency and to potentially reduce aggression. However, we believe that we can do more to leverage existing structures within the district to be more effective.

One goal is to improve student leadership training that empowers students through programs such as:

- ✓ Peer Leadership
- ✓ School Council
- ✓ Teacher mentoring as part of NEASC's goal to provide a student advisory program; and
- ✓ Using students as role models and mentors.



We also want to expand the emphasis throughout the district on empowering witnesses, and bystanders to use positive peer influence to educate students and reduce incidents.

**d. Education and awareness of parents and the community.**

The first opportunity to communicate with parents was provided in the fall of 2010 with the first “Parent University” mini-workshop that was led by the JSHS Assistant Principal and district principals as a district wide presentation. The workshop defined the key initiatives of the new Bullying Prevention legislation and was supported in part by the Holbrook Police Department who were active participants in the workshop.

Holbrook Public Schools has also worked in collaboration with the Holbrook Police Department and the Norfolk District Attorney’s Office with presentations on topics including cyberbullying and sexting since 2008.

The plan is to continue to provide these types of workshop at least twice yearly, once in the fall and once in the spring.

**e. Education and Awareness of Staff.**

Holbrook Public Schools will offer professional development opportunities throughout the school year in response to this new requirement and in response to issues that each school faces throughout the year. This includes mandatory training for ALL staff with the Norfolk County District Attorney’s Office. To date all staff have undergone general training in Bullying Prevention at school monthly faculty meetings and on the first day of school in August 2010. Each staff member also received training on Civil Rights mandates as per statute on the first day of school.

**f. Data-gathering and planning for incidents that occur on the school bus.**

Our plan is to gather data from our transportation supervisor and principals and analyze patterns of “bus incident” reports to understand the extent of the problem. Action steps, if needed, will be determined after the data collection.

**g. Cyberbullying.**

The biggest concern related to unsupervised out-of-school time is cyberbullying. The district intends to continue offering cyberbullying curricula at all schools, as well as annual parent training programs about issues related to cyberbullying, online behavior, and use of social networking sites in collaboration with the Holbrook Police Department and the Norfolk County District Attorney’s Office.

**C. Planning and Oversight**

- Receiving reports on bullying
  - Responsible Party- Building Principals
  - Timeline- Ongoing
- Collecting and Analyzing District-wide Data
  - Responsible Party- Superintendent’s Office

- Timeline- Twice yearly
- Collecting and Analyzing Building-level Data
  - Responsible Party- Building Principals
  - Timeline- Ongoing
- Creating Record and Tracking Incident Reports
  - Responsible Party- Building Principals
  - Timeline- Ongoing
- Planning for Professional Development
  - Responsible Party- Superintendent and PD Committee
  - Timeline- Ongoing
- Curriculum Selection
  - Responsible Party- Building Principals
  - Timeline- Spring 2017
- Upgrading or Developing New Policy
  - Responsible Party- Superintendent and School Committee
  - Timeline- Ongoing
- Staff and Student Handbooks
  - Responsible Party- Building Principal
  - Timeline- September 2016 – June 2017
- Parent and Community Engagement
  - Responsible Party- Superintendent
  - Timeline- Ongoing
- Review and Updating of Plan
  - Responsible Party- Superintendent
  - Timeline- Annually

#### **D. Priority Statements**

1. The district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.
2. The district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying.
3. We further recognize that students may be more vulnerable to bullying based upon actual or perceived differences related to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socio-economic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical

development or sensory disability or by associations with other people who have one or more of these characteristics. We will provide support to students whose vulnerability is brought to the attention of a teacher, guidance counselor or administrator through observation or direct report from a student, staff member or parent/guardian. This support may be in the form of counseling, education to support both the student's ability to report bullying and his/her skills, knowledge and strategies to respond to bullying or harassment.

4. We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities.
5. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying. The district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence.

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

### **Initial Staff Training**

Initial training for all staff was provided by each building principal and the Director of Pupil Personnel Services. The training took place on August 26, 2016 and during faculty meetings during the month of September at all three schools. The Junior-Senior High School also provided training to all new staff during the October faculty meeting. The content of the training included:

- ✓ Major points of the new law
- ✓ Age-appropriate programs currently in place in the district
- ✓ Special education provisions for vulnerable children
- ✓ Understanding the differences among bullying, harassment, and simple conflict
- ✓ Newly adopted district-wide definitions
- ✓ Respect for diversity and difference
- ✓ Understanding the bully
- ✓ Types of cyberbullying behaviors and Internet safety issues
- ✓ Why teachers and other adults must model expected behavior that promotes students' self-esteem and social skill development
- ✓ Staff responsibility in prevention and intervention
- ✓ Key principles for the ongoing education of students

### **A. Annual Staff Training on the Plan**

At the beginning of each school year, principals will provide annual training on the Plan, focusing on staff responsibilities in reporting and intervening in suspected incidents of bullying or harassment. This will include a review of reporting forms; staff responsibility

as mandatory reporters; the characteristics of aggressors, targets, and bystanders; and an overview of bullying prevention curricula in place in the school.

New staff members hired each year will participate in the full initial training.

#### **B. Ongoing Professional Development**

Principals have planned ongoing professional development through faculty meetings that address and revisit topics related to bullying prevention and intervention, including the use of incident reporting forms. Ongoing training will reinforce the key points of the initial training as well. Grade level and department meetings will continue to be used to discuss student dynamics and behaviors. 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.

#### **C. Written Notice to Staff**

The district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about its key points and staff responsibilities in the district's employee handbook.

### **III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

#### **A. Identifying Resources**

Through its Guidance Teams, each school has a clearly defined process for identifying students who may need counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. The district reviews staffing needs annually and has not identified significant service gaps. Resources are also allocated on an annual basis.

#### **B. Counseling and Other Services**

As a district with ELL students, the schools do not provide counseling services in a student's native language. However, through its ELL program, the ELL students will be provided translation services on as needed format.

Through the special education department, the needs of students with disabilities who may be vulnerable to bullying and harassment will be reviewed by teachers and administrators. Social skills programs are provided by classroom teachers and counseling staff through research-based programs such as Positive Behavior Intervention and Strategies (PBIS), Second Step. These all provide the foundation for a common language about the development of social competency skills and problem-solving techniques. In addition, the Guidance Teams provide consultation and more intensive services to those in need, including behavioral intervention plans and individualized therapeutic classroom programs.

#### **C. Students with Disabilities**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, and as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the special education department determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that may make him/her vulnerable to bullying, harassment,

or teasing because of that 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.

#### **D. Referral to Outside Services**

The guidance office in each school has a listing of agencies to refer students and families either individually or as a group to support their needs. Though these agencies are not sponsored by the school district, we have a close professional working relationship that allows us to provide direction to students or parents seeking support. These agencies include mental health agencies, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, counseling services, and hospitals. Referrals may be made by school counselors, nurses, principals, and other school personnel.

### **IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

#### **A. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches**

The district uses several research-based programs to develop social competency and to educate students about healthy relationships, problem-solving skills, and the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying. These include:

- ✓ *Positive Behavior Intervention and Strategies (PBIS)*

Counseling staff teach related skills through the guidance curriculum, as well as inform students about the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, which will be reviewed annually with students.

School-based programs and after-school clubs create school-wide awareness of important issues that support a safe school environment (i.e. S.A.D.D., Student Council, etc.).

#### **B. General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts**

The district supports approaches that are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. The following best practices underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- ✓ setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- ✓ creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- ✓ using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- ✓ using positive behavioral supports;
- ✓ encouraging adults to develop appropriate positive relationships with students;
- ✓ modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;

- ✓ using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- ✓ using the Internet safely; and
- ✓ supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

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

### **A. Reporting bullying or retaliation.**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously.

The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, 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. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

#### **1. Reporting by Staff**

A 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 s/he has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or designee. (In the event of an allegation against the Principal, the matter should be reported to the Superintendent and if against the Superintendent, to the Chair of the School Committee. In such cases, the Superintendent or Chair will ensure that the steps otherwise assigned to administrative personnel are implemented.)

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

The district 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. An individual may make an anonymous report of bullying or retaliation, however, no disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action. (See above for reporting of conduct by administrative staff.)

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

#### **1. Safety**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

#### **2. Obligations to Notify Others**

##### **a. Notice to parents or guardians.**

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 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 special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 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 will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with 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.

**C. Investigation.**

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

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

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

**D. Determinations.**

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or



guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

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

In addition, the Holbrook Public Schools will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

If either party is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, he/she may direct his/her concerns in writing to the Superintendent or designee for further consideration. In addition, regardless of the outcome, school officials will inform parents about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS) and how to access that system. 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.

## **E. Responses to Bullying.**

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

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

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;

- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

## **2. Taking Disciplinary Action**

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

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

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

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

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

# **VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES**

## **A. Parent Education and Resources**

The district will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and social competency programs used across the district. The programs may be offered in collaboration with the Holbrook Parent Education Group (HEPG), School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or other parent or community organizations.

## **B. Notification requirements**

Each year the 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 cyberbullying and online safety. The district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in available via our district and school webpages.

## VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited: on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, on a school bus, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned by the school district.

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 by the school district, 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.

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 or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

## VIII. DEFINITIONS

**Aggressor** is a student or a staff member who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or retaliation.

**Bullying** is systematically or chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. Bullying may involve but is not limited to:

1. unwanted teasing
2. threatening/intimidating behavior
3. stalking or cyberstalking
4. cyberbullying
5. physical violence
6. theft or destruction of school or personal property
7. sexual, religious, or racial harassment
8. public humiliation
9. social exclusion, including incitement and or coercion
10. spreading of falsehoods or rumors

Student behavior must meet three criteria to be considered bullying:

1. The behavior is repetitive. If a behavior occurs only once, it may constitute harassment, but it is not bullying.
2. The behavior is either unwanted, offensive, threatening, insulting, or humiliating; or the behavior causes the target to feel stressed, injured or threatened to the point that it impacts his/her educational experience or affects the school environment.

3. There is an imbalance of power between the target and the aggressor. Children who engage in peer aggression have more power than the target. The power advantage may be due to social status, age, size, and/or popularity.

**Cyberbullying** is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

**Harassment** is annoying, threatening, or unwanted behavior causing fear and/or limiting another's behavior and actions. Harassment can include:

**Verbal harassment** involves words that hurt and/or humiliate, including, but not limited to, teasing, name calling, and/or insults. The following are categories of verbal harassment:

1. Careless hurtful remarks appear to be thoughtless rather than malicious; repetitive "careless hurtful remarks" are probably not thoughtless, but in fact may be "verbal or written teasing/taunting" (see below).
2. *Verbal or written teasing/taunting* is the expression of language which is deliberately hurtful to a target's feelings, and can either be made directly to the target or within his/her or other children's hearing or sight.
3. *Verbal or written threats or taunts* are explicit remarks threatening future harmful behavior.
4. *Encouraging such harassment* is also a type of verbal harassment.

**Physical harassment** involves physical actions that are hurtful. The following are categories of physical harassment:

1. *Physical threats* include physical gestures used to convey to a target that s/he will be hurt, such as but not limited to raising a clenched fist or drawing a finger across the throat.
2. *Physical aggression* involves physically touching a target in a hurtful way that is unlikely to cause injury, including, but not limited to, pinching, pulling off hats, grabbing books, and/or blocking one's way. Taking or damaging someone's property is another form of physical aggression.
3. *Physical attacks* include, but are not limited to, pushing, shoving, kicking, hitting, punching, or pinning down.

**Relational harassment** involves convincing one's peers to exclude or reject certain persons and cut them off from their social connections. Verbal, physical, and relational harassment is bullying if it also meets the three criteria identified in the definition of bullying (above).

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

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of suspected bullying, or witnesses suspected bullying or harassment.

**Staff** includes educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and paraprofessionals.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## **IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or 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 on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or 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.

**APPENDIX A:**

**HPS Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Incident Reporting Form**

**Holbrook Public Schools Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Incident Reporting Form**

This form is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g. Incident Report to be filed in the disciplinary record and incident entered into the <electronic database>.

**Directions:** Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation are serious offenses and will not be tolerated. If you are a student, the parent/guardian of a student, a volunteer or visitor, and wish to report an incident of alleged bullying/harassment/intimidation, complete this form and return it to the Principal or Administrative Designee at the student's school. All school employees are required to report alleged violations. Contact the school for additional information or assistance at any time. This form can be completed anonymously by omitting signature and name and returning to the <appropriate location>.

**Every** reported act of bullying/harassment/intimidation will be investigated, and parents/guardians will be informed.

Name of Student Target \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Alleged Offenders \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Is she/he a student?  
 Yes  No  
 Yes  No

Incident Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Where did the incident occur? (Check all that apply)	What happened during the incident? (Check all that apply)	Did a physical injury result from this incident? (Check one)
<input type="checkbox"/> School Bus/Stop	<input type="checkbox"/> Taunting	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> To/From School	<input type="checkbox"/> Threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, medical attention required
<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Phone/Internet/ Social Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, medical attention NOT required
<input type="checkbox"/> School sponsored activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Stalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Contact
<input type="checkbox"/> Event off school property	<input type="checkbox"/> Theft	<input type="checkbox"/> Cyber-bullying
<input type="checkbox"/> School Grounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Number of days absent: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident: (use the back of this sheet for additional space) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you:  Student  Faculty/Staff  Parent/Guardian  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Leave blank if reporting anonymously.**

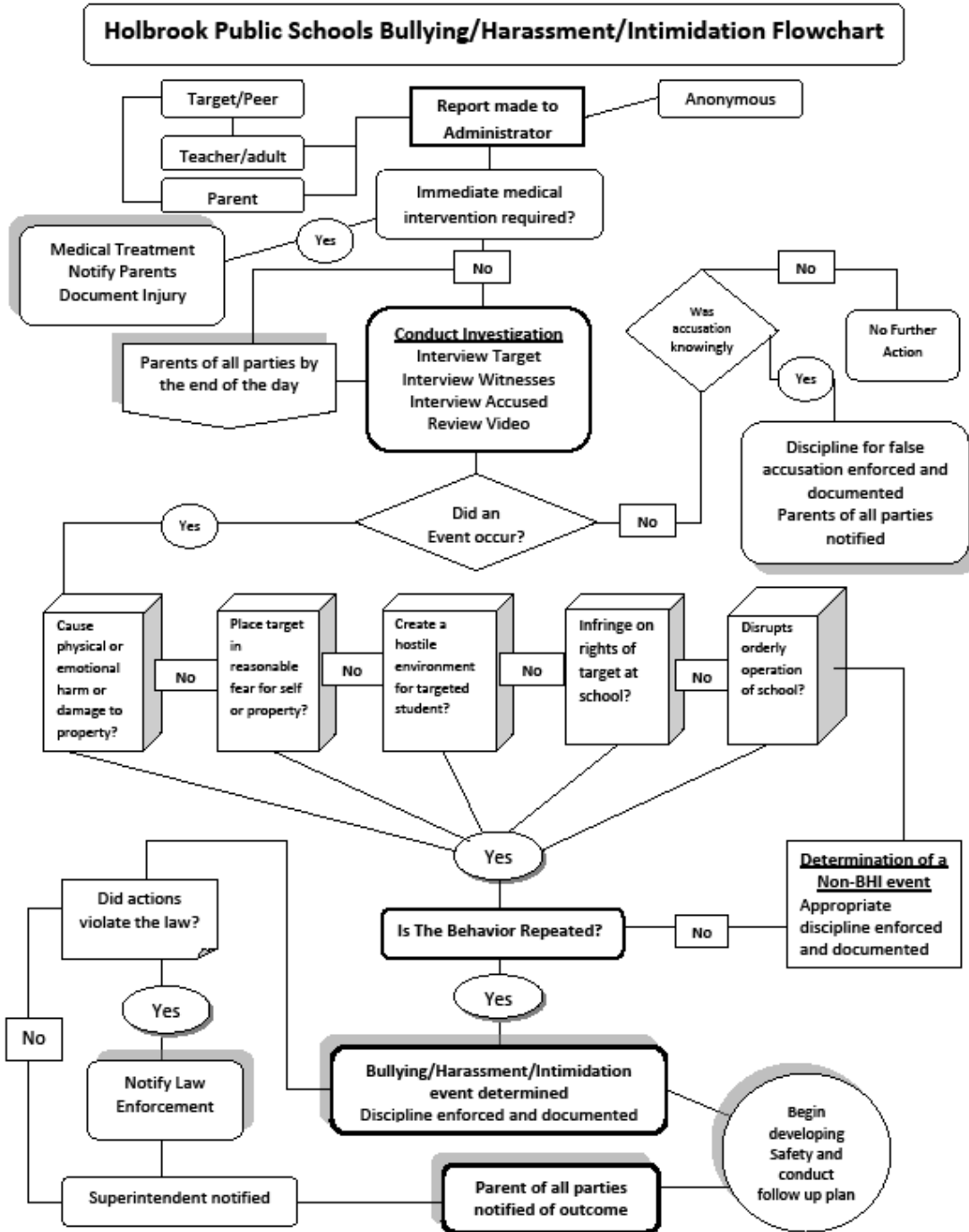
Person reporting incident: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Call Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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

APPENDIX B:

HPS Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Flowchart



**APPENDIX C:**

**HPS Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Investigation and Determination Form**

Holbrook Public Schools

**Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Investigation and Determination Form**

BHI Investigation Form to be filed in the disciplinary record and if incident results in a determination requiring school discipline or corrective action file will be entered into electronic database

Principal/Administrative Designee conducting Investigation: _____
Dates of Investigation ____/____/____ to ____/____/____ or OPEN

Targeted Student: _____	Date _____
Name of Parent _____	Method & Date of Contact _____

Aggressor (1) _____	Date _____
Name of Parent _____	Method & Date of Contact _____

Aggressor (2) _____	Date _____
Name of Parent _____	Method & Date of Contact _____

Attach additional sheets if necessary

Target Interview Page 1	
Target interview Date: _____	Relationship between the parties _____
Description of the Incident:	
How Frequently do incidents occur( times and places )	

Does the target perceive physical or emotional harm or damage to property?	Yes	No	TBD
Is the target in reasonable fear for them self or their property?	Yes	No	TBD
Does the target perceive that a hostile environment exists?	Yes	No	TBD
Are the rights of the target being infringed upon?	Yes	No	TBD
Is the orderly operation of the school to be disrupted?	Yes	No	TBD



Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Investigation and Determination Form

<b>Aggressor Interviews- Page 2</b>	
<b>Alleged Aggressor #1 interview Date:</b>	<b>Relationship between the parties</b>
<b>Description of the Incident:</b>	
<b>Explanation/Rationale of Incident:</b>	
<b>Alleged Aggressor #2 interview Date:</b>	<b>Relationship between the parties</b>
<b>Description of the Incident:</b>	
<b>Explanation/Rationale of Incident:</b>	

**Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Investigation and Determination Form**

<b>Witness Interviews- Page 3</b>		
<b>Witness #1</b>	<b>interview Date:</b>	<b>Relationship between the parties</b>
<b>Description of the Incident:</b>		
How Frequently do incidents occur( times and places )		
<b>Witness #2</b>	<b>interview Date:</b>	<b>Relationship between the parties</b>
<b>Description of the Incident:</b>		
How Frequently do incidents occur( times and places )		
<b>Witness #3</b>	<b>interview Date:</b>	<b>Relationship between the parties</b>
<b>Description of the Incident:</b>		
How Frequently do incidents occur( times and places )		

Holbrook Public Schools  
Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Investigation and Determination Form

ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS			
1.	Yes	No	Is there physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the targets property?
2.	Yes	No	Is the target in reasonable fear for themselves or their property?
3.	Yes	No	Is there a hostile environment for the target?
4.	Yes	No	Are the rights of the target being infringed upon?
5.	Yes	No	Is the orderly operation of school being disrupted?
*	Yes	No	Is the behavior repeated?

BHI FINDINGS		
Yes	No	BHI determined – complete safety conduct plans and file BHI Report, Investigation and Safety/Conduct forms in student discipline file
Yes	No	Bullying, Harassment or intimidation not determined – other actions taken Describe:
Yes	No	Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation not determined –intentionally false claim

ACTIONS		
Yes	No	Safety Plan
Yes	No	Conduct Plan
Yes	No	Police Contacted      Date if necessary:

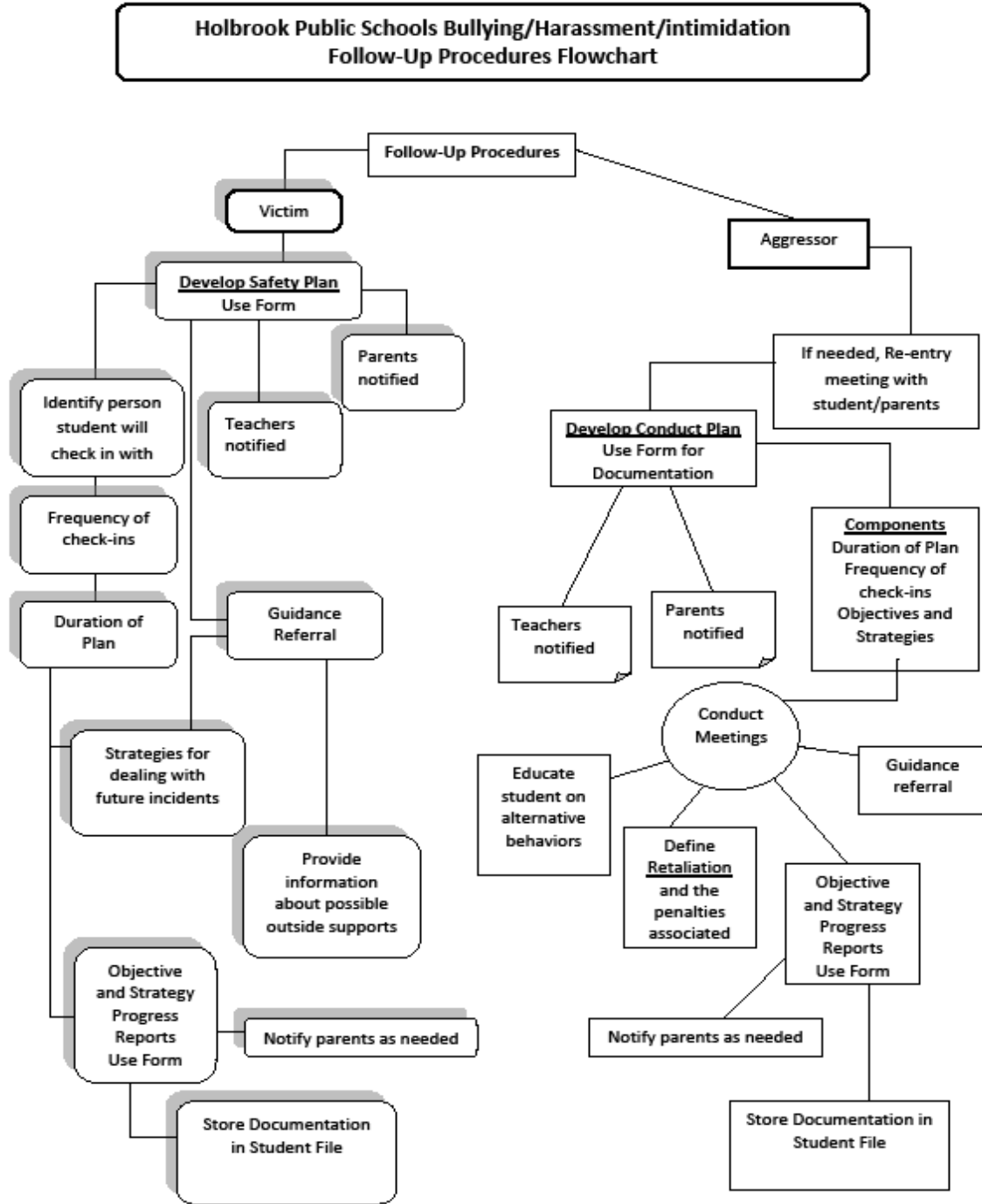
COMMUNICATIONS		
Contact	Date	Method of communication / notes
Target's Parent Guardian Name:		
Aggressor (1) Parent Guardian Name:		
Aggressor's (2) Parent Guardian Name:		
Witness (1) Parent Guardian Name:		

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal/Administrative Designee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

APPENDIX D:

HPS Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Follow-Up Procedures Flowchart



REFERENCES: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's  
Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

LEGAL REFS.: 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  
MGL 71:37O  
MGL 265:43, 43A  
MGL 268:13B  
MGL 269:14A

CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination  
ACAB, Sexual Harassment  
JBA, Student-to-Student Harassment  
JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing  
JICFB –Policy Prohibiting Bullying  
JK, Student Discipline Regulations

Adopted: December 22, 2010

Amended: March 23, 2017