

## **Purpose Statement**

Our school community is committed to making our school a safe, non-hostile learning environment for all students. We will treat each other with respect, and we will refuse to allow bullying of any kind at our school.

## **Defining Bullying**

Definition of bullying: "Bullying", including "cyberbullying", is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including, but not limited to, communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

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

Bullying may take various forms, including but not limited to the following:

- Teasing someone in a hurtful way, or name calling
- Using put-downs, such as insulting someone's race or making fun of someone for their gender
- Spreading malicious rumors or untruths about someone
- Threats
- Harassment
- Intimidation
- Stalking
- Physical Violence
- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Violence
- Theft
- Public Humiliation
- Destruction of Property
- Retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying
- Any of the above behaviors using electronic devices

*\*This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive*

## **Statement of Scope**

Our school's consequences for bullying apply when bullying happens:

- On school grounds: Immediately before or after school hours, during school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group
- Off school grounds: At a school activity, function, or event
- When traveling: to or from school or a school activity, function, or event
- When using property or equipment provided by the school



- On or off school grounds: When the behavior has caused significant disruption to the learning environment or interfered with an individual's ability to learn

### **Reporting Procedures and Privacy rights**

1. It is considered the responsibility of all students and school staff members to report acts of bullying. .
2. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of EECS.
3. EECS bullying policy aligns with the other policies of the school board.
4. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to one of the school social workers, the principal, the assistant principal, or any staff member with whom the student feels most comfortable speaking. Anonymous reports or information about a reported incident are also accepted.

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5. Erie Parents/ Guardians can also contact the main office @ 773-486-7161 in order to report relevant information about an investigation.
6. Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the designee will promptly inform the parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. ,

### **Responding to Bullying and Investigating Procedures**

7. Teachers and staff will:
  - Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground
  - Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens
  - Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports to ensure the safety of all students involved
  - Look into all reported bullying incidents
  - Assign consequences for bullying based on our school's discipline code/code of conduct.
  - Provide immediate consequences for those who retaliate against students who report bullying .
8. Erie administrator or designee will promptly investigate and address reports of bullying by:
  - making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within ten (10) school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
  - Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.



- Notifying the principal or school administrator of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
  - Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights and providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.
9. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is **prohibited**. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
10. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, any person knowingly making a false accusation or providing false information of bullying will be subject to disciplinary action or other appropriate remedial actions.
11. The designee will investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of EECS' jurisdiction and will provide the identified target with information regarding community resources including, but not limited to, counseling, support services, and other programs available.

### Consequences/Interventions

12. There will be consequences and appropriate remedial action for those involved in bullying. The developmental maturity levels of the parties, the levels of harm, the reasons surrounding the incident, the nature of the bullying, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, and the past history of the parties involved will be considered when posing consequences. Our school will follow our hierarchy of consequences for bullying found in the Code of Conduct.
13. The following include the interventions that can be taken to address bullying, which may include, but are not limited to:
- School social work services
  - Restorative measures
  - Social emotional skill building
  - Counseling
  - School psychological services
  - Community based services.

### Evaluation and Assessment

14. The designee will assist the board with it's evaluation and assessment of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, without limitation:
- The frequency of victimization
  - Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school
  - Identification of areas of the school when bullying occurs
  - The types of bullying that are common or occurring
  - Bystander intervention or participation
15. The evaluation process uses relevant data and information that EECS already collects for other purposes.
16. The EECS bullying prevention plan and evaluation is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.



17. Information developed as part of this evaluation process is available at [eriecharterschool.org](http://eriecharterschool.org) as well as in the EECS parent handbook.
18. Annual reports will be presented to the school board for use in development of prevention programs and/or modifications of this and other related policies. The annual report will be made available to the public upon request

### **Written Records**

Written records of all bullying incidents and their resolution are maintained using the following forms:

- Bullying report form
- Our school's discipline-tracking form
- Student safety plan
- Student behavior change plan
- In addition, written records of communication between our school and the involved parties and their families may be required.

### **Training and Prevention Education**

Our school takes a proactive approach to dealing with bullying by providing the following training and prevention education for our students and staff:

- Social skills lessons are a regular part of the curriculum at our school. The Second Step program and its Bullying Prevention Unit are taught in all grade levels.
- All staff go through the Bullying Prevention Unit online training on recognizing and responding to bullying effectively.
- In addition to the general all-staff training, teachers, counselors, and administrators are trained on how to coach and create safety and behavior plans.
- Staff members are trained and given resources to help create a positive classroom climate to minimize the likelihood that bullying will occur.

### **Communication Plan**

Bullying prevention information is communicated via:

- Bullying Prevention Unit Online Training
- Staff meetings
- Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit lessons
- Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit posters placed in every classroom
- The student/parent handbook
- Our school's website for families and the wider community
- Emails to families
- Communication via class dojo

