

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan 2023



Updated March 2023

Pentucket Regional School District

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Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

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PREFACE

The Pentucket Regional School District (PRSD) expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences. The District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber bullying. This commitment is integral to the District's comprehensive plan to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

Bullying, as defined M.G.L. c. 71, 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff 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 her to himself or herself or of damage to his or 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.

Cyber-bullying 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. See M.G.L. c. 71, 37O for the legal definition of cyber-bullying.

It is recognized that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment or teasing. The PRSD Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan ensures specific steps are taken 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.

Unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school related activities is unacceptable. All reports and complaints of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation are investigated promptly and action is taken to end bullying behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. This important work is supported by the Pentucket school community, curriculum, instructional practices, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent / guardian involvement.

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber bullying. The District's staff is committed to working with students, 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. Each building principal is primarily responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan in his/her building, except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal or the assistant principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

I. LEADERSHIP – ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The District Leadership Team includes: the Superintendent, School Principals, Special Education Director, Technology Director and Business Administrator.

Public involvement in the plan: As required by M.G.L. c. 71, S 37O, members of the Pentucket Regional School District’s Leadership Team began meeting in July 2010 to develop a comprehensive Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The Team was comprised of building administrators from the elementary, middle and high schools. Further input was provided by members of the District Leadership Team, faculty members, school guidance counselors, school council members and members of the local police departments. An open meeting held on December 16, 2010 to gather input, as well as to address questions/concerns, from members of the school community and the community at large allowed an opportunity for the public to be informed of the plan and suggest improvements. This Plan will be presented to the Pentucket Regional School Committee for approval every two years. Stakeholders are involved in the process for refining the Plan with input from the District Wellness Committee. School surveys from parents are considered in the revision of this plan

A. Assessing needs and resources:

The district leadership team, with input from families and staff, will:

Assess the adequacy of current program (e.g. conflict resolution, social responsibility, developmental guidance)	(Completed in Spring 2022)
Review current policies and procedures	(Completed in Spring 2022)
Review available data on bullying and behavior incidents	(Review annually in Summer with District leadership team)
Assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health	(Review will be on-going)

Based on findings, the district will:

Revise or develop new policies and procedures	(Completed through School Committee Policy sub-committee work from 2020-2022. Procedures reviewed each summer and part of student-family Handbook)
Establish partnerships with community agencies and law enforcement	(As Needed)
Set priorities for possible incorporation into school improvement plans	(As needed)

B. Needs assessments:

The district will collect information relevant to school climate and safety	(On-going)
The District's student information management system (MMS) may be useful for collecting and analyzing building –specific data on incidents of bullying behaviors, identifying vulnerable populations, and “hot spots” in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses.	(Infinite Campus now allows us to review this data through an ongoing process)
Information about school climate and safety is useful in to identifying patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.	(On-going)

C. Planning and oversight:

Building Principals are responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

Receiving reports on bullying and conducting initial investigation	(On-going)
Collecting and analyzing school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes	(Annually and on-going)

District Leadership is responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

Creating processes for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and student aggressors	(On-going)
Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law	(Annually and on-going)
Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and student aggressors	(On-going)
Choosing and implementing the curricula that the schools will use	(Review annually and review with District Wellness Committee)
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 implementation of them	(Annually and on-going)

Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct to, among other things, make clear that bullying of students by school staff or other students will not be tolerated	(Annually and on-going)
Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials	(Annually and on-going)
Reviewing and updating the Plan, as required by MGL 71 S370	(Every 2 years-July 2023)

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The District will provide ongoing professional development 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. Training about this plan is not required to be provided to outside organizations not directly related to the Pentucket Regional School District. This includes those groups and individuals that may use our facilities for their activities such as recreational athletics, outside arts organizations, and other outside vendors renting or using our fields or school building space.

A. Annual staff training on the plan:

The District will provide professional development 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. (Annually)

B. 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, 370, the content of school-wide and district-wide professional development will be informed by research including information on:

- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential (i.e. social status, job status, individual perception, fear of retribution) that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying.
- 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;
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying;
- 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' Individual

Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional relevant areas for professional development may include:

- Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
- Fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference
- Building relationships and communicating with families
- Constructively managing classroom behaviors
- Using positive behavioral intervention strategies
- Applying constructive disciplinary practices
- Teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others,
- Engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making
- Maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students
- Engaging staff and those responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors and designed to correct misconduct. Instill accountability in the school setting, etc. and bullying behaviors.
- Integrating kindness and mindfulness into the school-wide culture
- Vertical alignment of these skills to facilitate the transition from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school
- Integrating social competency and digital citizenship into the curriculum
- Building teachers' capacity to enhance each student's strengths for the purpose of building student self esteem and confidence.

C. Written notice to staff:

The district will provide all faculty and staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, and bullying of students by school staff, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct. Faculty and staff will be required to "sign off" on required training to document their participation. (Annually)

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying resources:

The Pentucket Schools have access to the following staff that is qualified to provide counseling and other services for targets, student aggressors, and their families: nurses, school psychologists, guidance / adjustment counselors and/or social workers.

B. Counseling and other services:

Counseling and support services are available for all students. Students experiencing conflict or other sources of undue stress may need support, including regular monitoring and intervention. Parents can access supports for their children by contacting the school principal.

The staff listed above assists in the development of safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, supporting social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors.

PRSD services and programs include:

- Access to school guidance services, school psychologist and Special Education Services
- Assistance for student returning from hospitalization or who have school avoidance issues
- Child Study Teams / Instructional Support Teams
- Outreach to Community Resources
- Functional Behavioral Assessments and behavior modification plans
- Social pragmatics instruction and courses for students with exceptionalities
- Curriculum and instructional practices that teach pro-social skills and conflict resolution at the elementary level (e.g. Second Step and Responsive Classroom)
- Social skills groups with Counselors
- Advisory programs
- Health/Wellness programs for the Middle and High School Levels
- School climate and safety monitoring and evaluation

C. Students with disabilities:

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, s.3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or 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. Parents and guardians will be given a copy of the district anti-bullying policy at annual meetings. In addition, if reports of bullying are made at IEP meetings, they will be communicated immediately to building principal or his/her designee for appropriate action in accordance with this plan.

D. Referral to outside services:

The Pentucket School District will support students and families accessing outside services when needed. Parents are encouraged to work directly with school counselors and the school principal for support when seeking access to outside services.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Note: The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education published guidelines for implementing social and emotional learning curricula. Please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/bullying/#9> to access current resources for parents and educators.

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches:

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

- Using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- 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;
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- Emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;

- Enhancing students' skills for developing empathy, impulse control, problem solving, anger management, and engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communication;
- Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference; and
- Developing student understanding that all members of the school community, including themselves are responsible for understanding and following through on this plan

At the start of each school year, students will be informed about the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. An assembly or class meeting may be useful in accomplishing this objective.

Schools may engage students to create messages and visual reminders that can be displayed around the school which support kindness and "upstanding" behaviors.

B. General teaching approaches/interventions that support bullying prevention efforts:

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These 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 students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students, among others.
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- Using positive behavioral supports;
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- Model, 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;
- Ensuring students are familiar with lunch/recess supervisors and aides
- Using the Internet safely; and
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

There are a number of interventions that schools within our district are using to engage students to create a sense of belonging and community and that encourage thoughtful and kind behavior. Some examples include:

- Advisory Groups
- Positive Behavior Plans (Random Acts of Kindness, etc.)
- Community Service Initiatives
- Morning Meetings
- Incident Management Teams
- Crisis/Safety Teams
- Student Support Teams
- Lunch Groups
- After School Clubs and Activities
- Familiarizing students with lunch/recess supervisors and aides
- Use of common curriculum models

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

A. Reporting incidents of 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 or to the Superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, 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, and may include, but are not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a voicemail box, a dedicated mailing address, and an email address. The form is available in the most prevalent languages or origin of students and parents/guardians in the district.

Anonymous reports can be made at any school, by calling the superintendent (978-363-2280), or by mailing a report to the superintendent or school committee's attention (22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985).

Anonymous reporting of complaints limits the ability of the school to fully investigate issues when all parties are not disclosed. In order to clarify any stated issues, it is important to be able to have conversations with all of the parties involved. When the names of parties under investigation are omitted or not allowed to be disclosed, this weakens the overall process and at times would mean that there would be no possible way to complete an investigation. Anonymous reporting from bystanders is encouraged as long as the participants are able to be identified. Therefore, it would be possible to follow-up with an investigation.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report; however, the building principal receiving the report will be required to document the incident using this form.

At the beginning of each school year the school or district will:

- Provide a copy of the Incident Reporting Form to students, parents and/or guardians;
- Make the form available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations as determined by the principal or designee; and
- Post it on the school's website.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, 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, and the Superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, 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.

Faculty, staff, and parents will be required to sign a statement indicating that they have received and read the district's policies and procedures. The schools will keep a record of these signed statements.

1. Reporting by staff:

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee or to the Superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may possibly be buying or retaliation. It is the responsibility of the staff member to intervene to the behavioral incident consistent with district's policies and procedures, and then report it to the principal or designee. Any PRSD staff member who observes or is aware of behavior that could be bullying or retaliation is required to make a report within one school day.

2. Reporting by students:

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

Students 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 or designee, or to the Superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor.

3. Reporting by parents or guardians, and others

The district expects 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, or to the Superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor. 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. Reports may be made anonymously at any school, by calling the superintendent (978-363-2280), or by mailing a report to the superintendent or school committee's attention (22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985).

Any report of bullying or retaliation requires the school to conduct an initial investigation. Every report will be documented and investigated. Because of school's responsibility to prevent bullying and intervene when incidents of hurtful behavior or bullying occur, it is advisable to file a report even if it isn't a complaint. Any parties involved (alleged target(s) and alleged aggressor(s)) will be notified within 3 days of receipt of the report that an investigation is currently being conducted. The investigation will continue until completion. The timeline will be conducted expediently and will depend on the investigation details and the number of parties or witnesses involved. Parties will be informed of the investigative finding in a manner that is consistent with federal and state law. In the event that finding of bullying or retaliation is made, the target(s) shall also be notified, to the extent permitted under federal and state law, of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

Students, parents or guardians, and others who want to report an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student will be able to access a PDF version of our Reporting Form on the district website (www.prsd.org), a hard copy of the Reporting Form will be included in school handbooks, can be accessed on school / District websites, and will be available in school and District offices.

Students, parents or guardians, and others seeking support may also contact the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) - Problem Resolution System (PRS). Emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation- Allegations of Bullying by a Student:

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 will 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/or altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target if possible. The principal or designee may take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. An example of a safety plan is included at the end of this plan.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting students who have reported bullying or retaliation, students who have witnessed bullying or retaliation, students who provide information during an investigation or students who have reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

C. Obligation to notify others:

1. 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 student 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 603 CMR 49.00.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and aggressor of the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, action taken to prevent further acts of bullying and retaliation. All notices to parents will comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of 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.

2. 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.

3. 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 that

criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the local police officer, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

D. Investigation:

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information know, including the nature of the allegations(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 student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation 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 and will access said legal counsel in accordance with school and district procedures.

1. 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:

- 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 school counselor, and the target's or student 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 or counseling support.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation. If bullying or retaliation is found, the action being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation will be communicated to the parents of the aggressor. All notices 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. If bullying or retaliation is found, the parents of the target will be informed of the school's plan to monitor the situation and to help ensure the safety of their child.

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 use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior to the aggressor. M.G.L.c.71, 370 (d) (v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- Offering individual or group skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- Providing relevant education 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;
- or
- Making a referral for an 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 incident, 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 the school's or district's code of conduct as found in each school's Student Handbook which is signed-off on annually by families. Depending on the nature and severity of the bullying, students may face a range of possible consequences including but not limited to one or more of the following; verbal warning, written warning, reprimand, detention, short term or long term suspension, expulsion. This list is not necessarily intended as a linear progression of disciplinary actions.

Discipline procedures for student with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be consulted in conjunction with state laws and regulations 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. Possible strategies may include but are not limited to:

- Increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur;
- Adjust transportation arrangements;
- Change schedule;
- Teach skills that will increase the child's resiliency; and
- Notify relevant faculty and staff to alert them to the need for increased vigilance

4. Follow-up:

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the implementation 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 supports immediately.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

A. Parent education and resources:

Strong partnerships between home and school will increase the capacity to support and promote pro-social behavior among students, and prevent and respond to bullying situations. The district will collaborate with organizations to provide supplemental learning opportunities related to issues pertinent to issues related to bullying. Among these are:

- Parent Teacher Organizations
- Special Education parent Advisory Councils
- Pentucket Education Foundation
- School Councils
- Pentucket Athletic Association
- Pentucket Arts Foundation
- Police Departments
- The Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
- Department of Children and Families

B. Notification requirements:

Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the District's Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber-bullying and online safety. The school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet Safety Policy. All notices and information made available to the parents or guardians will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website (prsd.org).

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

The law requires each Plan to include a statement prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The statement must be included in the Plan and included in the student code of conduct, the student handbook, and the staff handbook. The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, 37O (b), and describes the law's requirements for prohibition of bullying. It may be tailored to meet the specific priorities of the school or district.

A. 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.

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

For additional information, contact the superintendent of schools (978) 363-2280 / 22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

Several of the following definitions are copies directly from M.G.L. c. 71, 37O, as noted below. Schools or districts may add specific language to these definitions to clarify them, but may not alter their meaning or scope.

1. **Aggressor** is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation towards a student

2. **Bullying**, as defined M.G.L. c. 71, 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff 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 her to himself or herself or of damage to his or 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.

A working definition that may be more developmentally appropriate for use with students is, "Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose."

3. **Cyber-bullying** 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. See M.G.L. c. 71, 37O for the legal definition of cyber-bullying.

4. **Hazing** is any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance or any other brutal

treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any student or person, or which subjects any student or person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of basic necessities, (i.e. sleep, food) or extended isolation.

5. Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, 37O, 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.

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

7. School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

8. Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, 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, gender identity, 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 (i.e.: special education, homeless students, 504 status, court involved students, students without citizenship or others as listed above) 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, 37H1/2, or 37H3/4, collective bargaining agreements, 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.

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be posted on the Pentucket Regional School District website www.prsd.org.

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

LEGAL REFERENES:

Title VII, Section 703 Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended

Federal regulation 74696 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 REFERENCES:

AC, Nondiscrimination
ACAB, Harassment
JICFA Prohibition of Hazing

JK Student Discipline Policy
Student Handbooks

**PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BULLYING AWARENESS FORM
Appendix A**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The State of Massachusetts has developed a new zero tolerance policy on bullying and cyber bullying. The following link to resources on bullying prevention for parents is being posted in collaboration with the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State College.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/bullying/>

All parents/guardians are encouraged to become familiar with the information and policies regarding bullying and cyber bullying to ensure that you and your children are aware of the laws.

In addition, the PRSD has posted its Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on the school district's website: www.prsd.org

Please sign below and return the form to your child's homeroom teacher, indicating that the Pentucket Regional School District has made you aware of the anti-bullying law and available resources.

Bullying and Cyber Bullying (Part of the digital parental signoff)
Parent Sign-Off Form

Student's Name: _____

Grade: _____ HR Teacher: _____

Parent's Name Printed: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Appendix B

PLEDGE TO STOP BULLYING

This contract will be a record of your commitment to reduce bullying in your school. Read each item carefully then choose whether you want to sign this pledge. If you decide that you want to help stop bullying, print your name on the line below, and sign the bottom of the sheet in the space provided. By doing so, you are making a promise to your peers and to your school community. We congratulate you for your brave and important decision!

I, _____, wish to reduce bullying in my school. I agree to:
(Print Your Name Here)

1. Do my best to treat ALL my peers with respect and dignity.
2. Don't isolate, threaten, or harm my peers, or hurtfully tease, exclude, insult, or mock them.
3. Try to prevent or discourage my peers from humiliating, threatening, isolating, or harming others.
4. Try to assist any student who is being mistreated for the simple reason that it is wrong to be unkind to another human being.
5. If I am comfortable doing so, inform my parent/guardian, teacher, or school administrator when I learn about or see hurtful behavior.

(Your Signature)

(Today's Date)

**PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM
Appendix C**

1. Name of Reporter/Person Filling the Report: _____

Anonymous reports can be made at any school, by calling the superintendent (978-363-2280), or by mailing a report to the superintendent or school committee's attention (22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985). (Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. Check whether you are the: Target of the behavior ___ Reporter (not the target) ___

3. Check whether you are a: ___ Student ___ Staff member (specify role) _____
___ Parent ___ Administrator ___ Other

Your contact information/telephone number: _____

4. If student, state your school: _____ Grade: _____

5. If state member, state your school or work site: _____

6. Information about the incident:

Name of Target (of behavior): _____

Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

Date(s) of Incidents(s): _____

Time When Incidents(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incidents(s)(Be as specific as possible): _____

Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ Student ___ Staff ___ Other

Name: _____ Student ___ Staff ___ Other

Name: _____ Student ___ Staff ___ Other

Describe the details of the Incident (Including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person said, including specific words used)> Please use additional space on back if necessary.

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

Signature of Person Filling Out this Report: _____ Date: _____

I. INVESTIGATION

1. Investigators(s): _____ Position(s): _____

2. Interviews:

___ Interviewed aggressor Name: _____ Date: _____

___ Interview target Name: _____ Date: _____

___ Interviewed witness Name: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

3. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor: ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously? ___ Yes ___ No

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION? ___ Yes ___ No

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

II. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation: ___ Yes ___ No

___ Bullying ___ Incident documented as _____

___ Retaliation ___ Discipline referral only _____

2. Contacts:

___ Target's parent/guardian Date: _____

___ Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____

___ Superintendent Date: _____

___ Law Enforcement Date: _____ By _____

3. Action Taken:

Think About It / Written Reflection Letter of Apology to Target
 Loss of Privileges (specify) _____
 Detention (specify duration) _____
 Suspension Community Service Education Other

4. Describe Safety Planning: _____

Follow-up with Target: schedule for: _____ Initial/Date when complete _____

Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for: _____ Initial/Date when complete _____

Report forward to Principal: Date _____
(if principal was not the investigator)

Report forwarded to Superintendent: Date: _____

Signature and Title: _____ Date: _____

Students, parents or guardians, and others seeking support may also contact the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) - Problem Resolution System (PRS). Emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700

**PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM
Appendix D**

**PRMS Student Safety Plan for Harassment, Intimidation and/or Bullying
This plan will go into effect immediately upon receipt of a Bullying Report.**



(Insert Picture Above)

Student's Name:

Primary Contact:

Teachers:

Support Staff:

Grade Level:

Plan Start Date:

School/Staff:

Any and all staff members who work with student or students involved will be notified of this Safety Plan. This may include, but is not limited to, administration, xxx's teachers, support staff, bus drivers, before/after school program staff, trainers, coaches, recess and cafeteria monitors.

Any school staff member who witnesses or is otherwise made aware of any harassing or intimidating behavior directed toward xxx will intervene immediately and will report such behavior to school administration.

This Plan is confidential, but should be placed in substitute folders.

The school will report any harassing, intimidating or bullying behavior (that is reported) to xxx's parents as soon as possible.

School administration will meet with the aggressor and his or her parents/guardian in order to review expectations moving forward.

_____ will be designated as xxx's primary point of contact (trusted adult) on staff.

Student:

Xxx agrees not have contact of any kind with the aggressor in school while this Plan is in effect. Xxx agrees to not have contact with the aggressor outside of school (including via phone i.e. calling, texting, social media) as well.

Should xxx feel unsafe at any time or feel that the Stay-Away Agreement is not being followed, he/she will notify his/her parents, designated trusted adult, teacher, or other staff person immediately.

Parents/Family:

Parents and other family members agree to monitor and support the student with this Safety Plan and contact school if the problem persists.

Parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to check on the effectiveness of the Plan.

Should there be any further incidents of teasing/harassment/intimidation directed toward xxx, school administration will notify parents immediately and initiate a Bullying Investigation as appropriate.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Principal Signature: _____

Date:

Completed / Modified / Extended: