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# **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School

215 Fitchburg Street, Marlboro , MA. 01752

## **Assabet Valley Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

Assabet valley Regional Technical High School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is based on the development of skills and knowledge implemented by consistent training and open conversations with the school community. Assabet Valley RTHS wants to provide a safe and respectful learning environment for each members of our school. This plan addresses the requirements of the new bullying prevention law, M.G.L. c. 71, ss 370, as added by chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010.

The school expects that all members of the community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences. The school is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, or homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school will take specific steps to create a safe environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide these students with the skills and knowledge to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any 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. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our activities, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying, and the school is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established the plan for preventing,

intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan.

## **I. Leadership**

*Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School acknowledges the fact that unless the adults and students in every school learn how to recognize and deal with situations in which bullying occurs, bullying will not stop. As a school we believe every adult must receive training in how to recognize bullying and what actions to take to stop it. Leadership in our building plays an important role in the efforts to prevent or intervene with any bullying that may occur.*

### **A. Public involvement in developing the plan:**

1. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, 370, our plan does consult with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement, students, parents, and guardians.
  - The school will post the completed Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on the school website and allow for outside comments and suggestions during a specific time period.
  - A Connect-Ed phone call will be put out to all parents, as well as anyone in the schools phone directory, notifying them of the access to the plan.
  - Student, teacher and community surveys will be referred to when developing the plan.
2. Six representatives from the building will be trained by the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) in the skill of bullying prevention. They in return will train all staff members.
3. The School Improvement team will review and address bullying data with the principal and administration team in order to provide further insight on prevention ideas.
4. Bullying will also be addressed on the agenda for the School Advisory Council, National Honor Society and during individual class officer meetings. The idea is to provide a wide spectrum of input through as many groups as possible.
5. The School Committee will review the bullying prevention plan.

### **B. Assessing needs and resources:**

1. The main resources used in developing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will come from the in depth material provided to the school at the MARC Train the Trainer conference. This detailed professional development program for faculty and staff was attended by six individuals from our school.

2. Assabets bullying policy will be revised to meet new law requirements. These changes will be added to the school handbook.
3. Student and staff surveys will be used as a resource to address immediate and important issues as defined by the school community. These surveys will help identify the problems, and help create a school climate where bullying is not tolerated.
4. The Dean of Students and Director of Pupil Services are the school administrators to contact in regards to questions on the plan.
5. The school has a memorandum of understanding with the local police force. The Dean of students will use his connection with the school's resource officer Detective (currently: Lou Turieo) to address any bullying situations that may occur.
6. Every student in the school, through assemblies and then regular classroom discussions will learn about, and be given opportunities to discuss bullying.
7. The school will put together bullying awareness campaigns, and encourage student groups to pursue ideas that foster a healthier school environment.

C. Planning and Oversight:

1. Identifying the school and district leaders responsible for tasks under the new Bullying Prevention plan:
  - The Director of Pupil Services will be responsible for receiving and maintaining a data base on reports of bullying.
  - Director of Pupil Services will analyze bullying data, and assess present problems, as well as measure improved outcomes. The Dean of Students will assist in this.
  - The Curriculum Director will address and plan professional development required by law.
  - The Dean of Students and w Director of Pupil Services will respond to the needs of targets and aggressors.
  - The Administration will choose and implement curricula for the school.
  - Director of Pupil Services and the Principal will develop new or revise current policies and protocols, including internet safety.
  - The principal will oversee the amending of student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct.
  - All administration will engage the efforts and involvement of families and parents.
  - All administration will review the plan together each year, and make amendments as needed.

D. Developing priority statements:

1. We will not tolerate any lawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on our school grounds, in school related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent and guardian involvement.

## II. Training and Professional Development

*Researchers say that the only kind of anti-bullying plan with any kind of hope is one that involves continuous training and revisiting of school policy. Our school, on a yearly basis will continue to train staff, and provide students with the safe school assurance presentations.*

### A. Annual Staff Training Plan

1. We will utilize six staff members that have been certified by MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center) in bullying and cyber-bullying prevention with the intention of training and updating staff on a yearly basis.
2. One of six trained staff members will address bullying prevention with new staff hired after the start of the year. (This will be done at specific monthly staff meetings, as well as during professional development days.

### B. Ongoing Professional Development

1. Assabet Valley will maintain a professional relationship with MARC in order to maintain an appropriate number of trained staff members. This will enable the school to remain current on the most effective bullying prevention methods and allow for productive staff development.
2. Professional development will address building staff member's skills in preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and retaliation.
3. As required by M.G.L. c. ss 370, the content of school wide and district wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:
  - (I) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying
  - (II) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
  - (III) Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying.
  - (IV) Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment.

- (V)information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying
  - (VI)information on internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying
4. Additional areas of professional development will include:
- Promotion and modeling the use of respectful language
  - Fostering and understanding respect for diversity
  - Building relationships and communicating with families
  - Constructively managing classroom behaviors
  - Using positive behavioral intervention strategies
  - Applying constructive disciplinary practices
  - Engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision making

### **III. Access to Resources and Services**

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

1. Assabet will continue to offer access to adjustment counselors, mentors, school psychologist and administration for targets, aggressors and families as needed.
2. The Director of Pupil Services, or their designee, will meet with each person involved in the situation to provide information needed to resolve matters of bullying and retaliation, and address all concerns pertaining to each individual case.
3. Bullying prevention curricula will be researched on an ongoing basis by the guidance department to make certain the most current and effective methods are in place.
4. Trained staff members will meet regularly to discuss and possibly implement new and effective bullying prevention ideas two times a year.
5. Guidance department will map all resources available

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

1. Assabet will continue to offer culturally and linguistically appropriate resources on bullying and cyber-bullying prevention within the school district.
2. Education and prevention methods for bullying will be introduced into all curricula in an appropriate manner.
3. The SSIC (Social Skills Instructional Center) will develop and implement a specific unit of lesson directed at the prevention of bullying and cyber-bullying. These will be submitted to the Dean of Students for approval.

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

- As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, ss 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, harassing or teasing.

D. Referral to Outside Services

1. The guidance department will use a referral protocol when referring students and families to outside services. These referrals will comply with all relevant laws and policies.
2. Some outside services the school may use in a referral could be, but is not limited to:
  - You Inc. (Worcester, MA.)
  - DCF, (Department of Children and Family services)
  - Worcester Youth Guidance Center
  - Advocates Counseling Services
  - Child and Family services
3. The guidance department will consult with the school adjustment counselors on the best services available for each specific incident.

**IV. Academic and Non-Academic Activities**

*Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School understand that insuring age appropriate instruction and understanding is vital to the success of implementing a bullying and cyber-bullying prevention plan.*

Each person involved (participants, coaches, advisors, activity leaders, etc.) On any level with a school club, activity, sports team and non-academic activity will be required to sign off on the Anti-Bullying, Retaliation, and Hazing Agreement provided to them by the school. Without completing this agreement, participation will not be permitted.

A. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches

*Assabet Valley will implement various methods of preventing bullying and providing awareness on the subject to students. The following list is some examples of approaches the school currently uses, and plans on adding. This list will always be available for additional methods.*

1. The Safe Schools Assurance Program: Presentation to entire student body on a yearly basis.
2. Staff trained by “Train the Trainer” will be addressing individual classes and assemblies at different times of the year. These different presentations will be dependent on the newest and most prevalent topics related to anti-bullying.
3. Supporting diversity while preventing bullying: Genuine efforts by the school in association with the bilingual adjustment counselor will bring about new and student-centered ways to support a diverse school environment that is bullying free.
4. Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when the eyewitness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance

5. Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications

B. General Teaching that Supports 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.
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline
- Using positive behavioral supports
- Encouraging adults to develop 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
- Supporting students interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

C. Guidelines for Student Internet Use

*The sole purpose of internet access is to support education by providing students with access to unique resources and an opportunity for collaborative work. All uses of the Assabet Valley RTHS internet access must be in support of and consistent with these educational objectives. All students who use the school's internet access are expected to read these guidelines and/or take part in a discussion of the guidelines with a teacher. Adherence to the guidelines is a condition for a student's privilege of internet access.*

1. **Students Responsibility:** All student use of the internet is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Nevertheless, faculty members are not expected to monitor student use at every moment.
2. **A privilege:** Internet access is a privilege. A student's access may be taken away by school officials if the privilege is abused. Inappropriate conduct on the Assabet Valley internet will also be subject to disciplinary action.
3. **Personal safety:** The internet is accessible to the public. Unfortunately, this includes people who want to make contact with students for inappropriate purposes or under false pretenses. Assabet Valley does all it can to monitor this,



but cannot guarantee it will not happen. Therefore, students must be cautious and prudent about supplying personal information and arranging meetings. In particular, students should never arrange a personal meeting with a person who was met on-line without their parents' or guardians knowledge and approval. Students should promptly inform their teacher or school administrator of any on-line communication that the student feels is threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.

4. **Unacceptable Uses of the Internet:** These are included but not limited to;
- Posting private or personal information about another person
  - Accessing or transmitting obscene or pornographic material
  - Posting chain letters or engaging in "spamming"
  - Engaging in harassment of any type
  - Participating in any communications that facilitate sale or use of drugs or alcohol; that facilitate criminal activity; that threaten, intimidate, or harass any other person; or that violate any laws
  - Plagiarism
  - Infringing copyrights
  - Facebook or social networking
  - Participating in commercial activities that are not directly related to the educational purposes of Assabet Valley RTHS

**V. Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation**

*This section has been adopted from the Massachusetts School's Comprehensive Civil Rights Policy for promoting civil rights and bullying prevention policy. Copies of this policy for staff and students are available upon request.*

At Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School, we want to be faithful to the emotional and physical safety of each student in our school. In our modern society, one of the main causes of fear and insecurity in a school community is bullying. Bullying is present everywhere; it can be loud and visible, or silent and sneaky. With your help we can find out when, where, and how the bullying is taking place. Stopping bullying is a commitment that Assabet Valley would like to make with the community, with the belief that the outcome will be a safer school environment for everyone.

Assabet Valley RTHS prohibits bullying, as defined below. Our school will not tolerate retaliation against persons who take action consistent with this policy or Assabet Valley's Comprehensive Civil Rights Policy.

The prohibition against bullying and retaliation applies to all students on all sites and activities the school supervises, controls or where it has jurisdiction under the law, including

on school premises and school-sponsored functions, events or activities, including fieldwork, athletic activities and school-related transportation.

Reports or complaints of bullying, discrimination, and retaliation may be filed, and will be investigated, as outlined in the Assabet Valley Comprehensive Civil Rights Policy.

A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

1. What should you do if you are being bullied?

- If any student believes they have been the victim of bullying, or a staff member or parent/guardian believes that a student has been the victim of bullying, he/she should bring the matter to the attention of a classroom teacher, the Director of Pupil Services or the Dean of Students. Additionally, the matter can be brought to any staff member of the school that personal may feel a connection with. All staff members are then required to report the incident to administration. Reports of bullying may be done in writing or verbally.

2. What should I do if I witness bullying?

- It can be difficult to do something about bullying. You may be afraid to say something, or you might not know what to do. Assabet Valley will do everything possible to help, but we need others to be part of the solution. You are never alone, and can and should get help from the adults in the building. You can help by defending others against bullies, by letting them know that what they are doing is wrong and hurtful. You can also choose to never join in on bullying behavior, setting the example of being a caring individual. Finally, you can report any bullying to staff members within the building.

3. What are my options for reporting resources?

- Incident reporting forms available in guidance
- School voicemail
- Email to school administration
- Directly to any administrator or staff member

B. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

*In the Assabet Valley RTHS community, we do not tolerate the actions of bullies. While the response to bullying will always depend on the severity of the incident, action will always be taken. The school has in place a process that involves the students, staff, parents and referral to support staff. Each incident will include the involvement of all these vital elements and be handled individually and with great consideration for a safe environment.*

1. **Response #1:** Meeting with teacher, Guidance, Dean of Students or any Staff:
  - Any staff member that handles a bullying complaint will ensure that the immediate behavior stops and will reinforce that the behavior will not be tolerated. The staff member will then involve the Dean of Students or Head of Guidance, if they are not already involved. During this meeting, the staff member will redirect the student and come up with a plan for success in case he/she finds herself/himself in a similar situation in the future.
2. **Response #2:** Notification of Parents:
  - Administration will notify the parents of both the target and the aggressor regarding the incident. The aggressor or Parents may be asked to meet with the Dean of Students, Director of Pupil Services, or other staff members. Discipline, if any, for the aggressor, will be discussed at this point.
3. **Response #3:** Referral to Support Staff:
  - Students involved may meet with the schools guidance counselors, adjustment counselors or school psychologist in order to prevent a situation recurrence.
4. **Response #4:** Notification of Law Enforcement or Other School Districts
  - If the reported incident involves students from other school districts, Assabet will promptly notify the principal or designated individual from that building about the incident and students involved. If the school has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. Notice of the police will be consistent with the requirements of 603CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements such as the memorandum of understanding with the Marlboro Police.

C. Investigation

1. The Dean of Students or Director of Pupil Services 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.
2. During the investigation the staff member in charge will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary.
3. Whoever is conducting the investigation will remind the aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
4. 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.
5. The staff member interviewing will maintain confidentiality during the investigation process, and maintain a written record of the investigation.

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

D. Determinations:

1. The Dean of Students or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances.
2. If, after the investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, reasonable steps will be calculated and taken to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefitting from school activities.
3. The Dean of Students or designee will:
  - Determine what remedial action is required, if any
  - Determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary

*Depending upon the circumstances, the Dean of students or designee may choose to consult with the students' teachers and/or school counselor, and the target's 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.*

4. The Dean of Students or designee will promptly;
  - Notify parents or guardians of the target and aggressor about the results of the investigation
  - Report if bullying or retaliation is found
  - Report what actions are to be taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation
  - Make certain that all notice to parents comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations.

*Due to legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Dean of Students 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.*

E. Response to Bullying:

If the Dean of Students or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found during the investigation. Disciplinary sanctions and corrective actions may also be taken, and may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following: All discipline matters are handled confidentially.

1. A written warning

2. An apology to the victim and family
3. Loss of school privileges
4. Limited access to areas of the school
5. Awareness training (To help student understand the impact of their behavior)
6. Parent conferences
7. Participation in empathy development, cultural diversity, anti-bullying or intergroup relations programs
8. Detentions , Saturday school, Social Skills Instructional Center assignments
9. Notification of police
10. Removal from co-op work sites
11. Exclusion from participation in school-sponsored functions, programs, activities, athletics, or extra-curricular activities
12. Short-term or long-term suspensions
13. Any other action authorized by and consistent with the disciplinary code
14. Expulsion from school

*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.*

**Student Responsibilities:**

*Each student is responsible for:*

1. Ensuring that (s)he does not bully another person on school grounds or in a school-related function, event or activity
2. Ensuring that (s)he does not retaliate against any other person for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, or for cooperating in an investigation of harassment, bullying, discrimination, or hate crime; and
3. Cooperating in the investigation of reports or complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, or a hate crime

**False Charges:** Any student who knowingly makes false charges or brings a malicious complaint may be subject to any disciplinary action detailed above.

**Protection Against Retaliation:** The school will take appropriate steps to protect students from retaliation when they report, file complaint of, or cooperate in an investigation of a violation of the Assabet Valley Comprehensive Civil Rights Policy. Threats or acts of retaliation, whether person-to-person, by electronic means, or through third parties, are serious offenses that will subject the violator to significant

disciplinary and other corrective action, including short or long-term suspension, exclusion or expulsion.

## **VI. Collaboration with Families**

*Assabet's new policy will be available to the whole community. It will be used to launch discussion in classrooms about the schools expectations and the way we plan to work together to make this policy successful*

### **A. Parents or guardians should work to reinforce the curricula and support the school district plan**

1. Parents/Guardians please read the policy with your children
2. Parents/Guardians please discuss the language (definitions provided) with your children , so they have a complete understanding of the policy
3. Review Policy on website and provide feedback in allocated space
4. Model positive behaviors and social relationships for our children, so that the message between home and school are consistent and reliable

### **B. Assabet will provide appropriate materials on the dynamics of bullying**

1. A Connect-Ed phone call will be sent out to inform parents of the availability of the Bullying Prevention Plan to students and online
2. Copies of the schools Memorandums of Understanding with the Marlboro and Hudson police are available upon request
3. Parent education and resources will include, but are not limited to:
  - Director of Pupil Services as a reference point/ Bullying Liaison
  - School Website: Provides in-depth information
  - Teachers, Administration and Guidance dept.
4. Online Safety and Cyber-bullying
5. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention Plan, in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents/guardians

### **C. Notification Requirements**

*All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats.*

### **D. Students with Disabilities**

When the Special Education Department determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development, or the student 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 skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

## **VII. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation**

*Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited.*

- A. On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or 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
- B. 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 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, ss 370, nothing in this plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.*

#### **VIII. Definitions**

- A. Aggressor: is any member of the school community (including Students and Staff) who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation
- B. Bullying: as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, ss 370, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:
  - 1. Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
  - 2. Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to myself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
  - 3. Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
  - 4. Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
  - 5. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- C. Target: is any member of the school community (including Students and Staff) against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated
- D. Cyber-bullying: as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, ss 370, is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication (i.e. Telephones, cell phones, computers and the internet), which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in

whole or part by a wire, electronic email, internet communication, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying also includes;

1. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
  2. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of a posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions listed in 1-5 of the definition of bullying, and
  3. The distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions listed in 1-5 of the definition of bullying
- E. 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 persuasive to alter the conditions of a student's education
- F. 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
- G. Staff: includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors for extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals

## **IX. Relationship to Other Laws**

*Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantage, 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, ss 37H or 37H1/2, 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.*



