



Bullying Prohibition Policy

PURPOSE:

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other disruptive or violent behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and a teacher's ability to educate. Natural Science Academy cannot monitor the activities and conversations of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students. However, the school intends to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist Natural Science Academy's goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, reprisal, retaliation, and other similar disruptive and detrimental behavior.

DEFINITIONS:

Bullying (prohibited conduct) means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act/conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students creating an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in bullying and the target of bullying that has or can be reasonably predicted by repeated forms or pattern to have one or more of the following effects:

- Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
- Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
- Substantially interfering with the student's educational opportunities and performance.
- Substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.
- "Cyberbullying" means using electronic information and communication technologies to bully. This may include, but is not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network, Internet, website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cellphone, or other electronic device.

PROHIBITIONS:

Bullying of a student or group of students is prohibited:

1. During any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned programs, activities, events or trips.
2. In school buildings, school property, on school buses or other school district-provided transportation, and at designated locations for students to wait for buses and other school district-provided transportation.

3. Through the transmission of information from a school district computer or computer network, or other electronic school equipment.
4. When communicated through any electronic technology or personal electronic device while on school property, on school buses or other school district-provided transportation, and at designated locations for students to wait for buses and other school district-provided transportation.
5. Off campus communication and use of electronic technology which seriously disrupts any student's education.

Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are also prohibited.

REPORTING PROCEDURES:

- Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim on bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to a staff member (their teacher or Ms. Reina.) A person may report bullying anonymously. However, Natural Science Academy may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other necessary responses.
- Natural Science Academy encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available in the office but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.
- The Compliance Coordinator is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at the school level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to her or any staff member. If the complaint involves her it may be reported to a lead teacher.
- The school report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters.
- All NSA staff members, volunteers, and contracted employees shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who witnesses, receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct and shall inform the building report taker immediately. School personnel who fail to inform the building report taker or fail to make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law. NSA will respect the privacy of the complainant's, the individuals against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.
- Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, work assignments, or educational or work environment.

RESPONSE:

After receiving a complaint, Natural Science Academy will begin an investigation on the matter. When investigating a complaint, the designee may take into account the following factors:

- The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved.
- The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior.
- Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior.
- The relationship between the parties involved.
- The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

The report taker or other appropriate school officials may take immediate steps at their discretion to protect the target or victim of the bullying.

The alleged perpetrator of the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline.

Investigation of a bullying incident shall be initiated within three school days of receipt of a report and be completed within 10 school days, unless a lead teacher grants in writing an additional five-day extension due to extenuating circumstances.

The investigation will consist of:

- Identifying the alleged actor(s), target(s), and bystander(s), as well as any adult who witnessed the incident or may have reliable information.
- Conducting an individual interview in a private setting with the alleged actor and target. Interviews will never be done together or in public. Interviews shall also be conducted with bystanders.
- Determining how often the conduct occurred, any past incident or continuing pattern of behavior, and whether the target's education or participation in school activities was negatively affected.
- Assessing the individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety, and assigning school staff to create and implement a safety plan to prevent the recurrence of an incidence that will restore a sense of safety for the target and other students who have been impacted. *If it is determined the reported incident may involve criminal activity or the basis for criminal charges, information must be conveyed to the appropriate authorities.*

Upon completion of the investigation that determines that bullying or other prohibited conduct has occurred, Natural Science Academy will take appropriate action. Such action may include , but is not limited to, warning, suspension, expulsion, remediation, or termination. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited conduct.

REPRISAL:

Natural Science Academy will take appropriate action against any student or employee who retaliates against any person who reports alleged bullying or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, preceding, or hearing relating to such bullying. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

NOTICE OF REQUIREMENTS:

Natural Science Academy will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and employees, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook and posted on the school website.

This policy will be given to each school employee and independent contractor who regularly interacts with students at the time of initial employment at Natural Science Academy.

This policy will be posted in the school office in an area accessible to students and employees.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION:

Natural Science Academy annually will provide information and any applicable training to school staff regarding this policy.

Natural Science Academy will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying.

Adopted: _____

Reviewed: _____

Natural Science Academy
920 Holley Avenue, STE 3
St. Paul Park, MN 55071

Phone: 651-925-5050
Fax: 651-925-5051