

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Mansfield Public Schools prohibits bullying as defined by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, in school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. District administrators 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. The Mansfield Public Schools supports this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement. The District is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence.

This plan is based on, and incorporates, the required components of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) created the Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan required under, in consultation with state agencies, school personnel, advocacy organizations, and other interested parties.

The Mansfield Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber bullying. The District recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. This Plan will identify specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in our school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

Publication and Notice

At the beginning of each school year, staff, parents/guardians, and students are provided with written notice of the district's policies and protocols for reporting bullying and retaliation. Reporting procedures, forms and other resources, including the name and contact information for district and building-level administrators, are provided in student and faculty handbooks, in designated locations in each school building, and in information about the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan that is made available to parents/guardians and community members via the Mansfield Public Schools website.

Each year we will inform parents/guardians about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used; this notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber bullying and online safety. Parents/guardians will be sent student-related sections of the Plan and the District's Internet Safety policy.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians.

This Plan will be reviewed and updated by December 31 each year.

I. LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in developing, implementing and revising the Mansfield Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. It is also the responsibility of district leadership to involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing, revising and implementing this plan.

Public Involvement

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, this plan was developed in 2010 in consultation with Mansfield Public School administrators, faculty and staff; school councils, school volunteers and parent groups; students, parents, guardians and interested community members, the Mansfield Police Department, and the Mansfield School Committee. Notice and public comment period were provided, and community members were encouraged to offer their feedback on the draft plan to school administrators.

As part of the district's ongoing review of policies and procedures that affect school safety, this plan was reviewed in the Fall of 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. It was updated to incorporate subsequent changes to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O in Fall 2013, to reflect the change in the law's definition of "perpetrator" to include a member of the school staff, and in 2014 to recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics.

Assessing Needs and Resources

The **Superintendent and the Bullying Prevention Committee**, with input from faculty, staff, and parents/guardians, will revise and develop policies and procedures to continue building a safe bully-free school environment in partnership with community agencies, including law enforcement. The following activities are completed with a focus on data from multiple sources to best guide decisions.

1. Review of current policy and procedures;
2. Assessment of available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services for on-going professional development;
3. Analysis of initial and on-going periodic survey results from students, faculty, staff, and parents/guardians on school climate and safety issues;
4. Analysis of the surveys and data from the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS);

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

5. Input from staff, parents and guardians, and community members through each of the Mansfield Public Schools School Councils to design and revise programs;
6. Analysis of the data from (X2) which records and tracks incident reports is used to guide decision making to improve climate and reduce bullying.
7. Development of resource bank of relevant printed and online materials for parents and students;
8. Review of Massachusetts comprehensive Health and Wellness curriculum frameworks to provide context for anti-bullying curriculum;

Planning and Oversight

School Principals will implement and oversee this plan in their respective buildings except when a reported bullying incident involves the Principal or the Assistant Principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the **Superintendent** or designee will investigate 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 will investigate the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

Bullying Prevention Committee

The **Superintendent** convenes the **Bullying Prevention Committee**, which is comprised of school administrators and staff, the School Resource Officer, Mansfield Police Department, and the Nurse Leader. The Bullying Prevention Committee is the group that plans and oversees the Mansfield Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The Bullying Prevention Committee works in consultation with school nurses, guidance staff, health and wellness faculty, outside consultants, school council members, student leaders, and school administrators as needed.

This Committee meets quarterly to complete the following:

1. Reviews reports on bullying.
2. Collects and analyzes building and school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure effectiveness of improvements.
3. Reviews and updates the process for recording and tracking incident reports and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors.
4. Plans for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law and schedules ongoing professional development that contains all of the components as defined by the law.
5. Plans supports to respond to the needs of targets and aggressors.
6. Develops drafts and proposals for new curriculum, policies, and protocols under the Mansfield Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and designate qualified candidates/key staff to be in charge of implementing the changes.
7. Consults with the Mansfield Public Schools Director of Technology if revisions are needed for the Internet Safety Policy for the school department.
8. Recommends amendments to student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

9. Consults with the Mansfield Health and Wellness Council, the Mansfield Elementary School Association, the QMS Parent Advisory Council, the Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and the School Councils as needed to plan parent or family engagement efforts and to draft and disseminate parent information materials.
10. Reviews and updates the Mansfield Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by December 31st of every year

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Mansfield Public Schools will meet the requirements under MGL c. 71, §370 to 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, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Annual Staff Training

All MPS employees are required to complete a district-wide training in the first two months of the school year. New employees that have a start date on October 31 or later have one month (30 days) to complete and view the district-wide training, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years. All district administrators are available for questions or concerns.

Ongoing 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 and will include information on:

- Developmentally or age-appropriate strategies to prevent bullying and immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and/or 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; and Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.
- Professional development includes strategies to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities. Focus is given as needed to staff that develop students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This includes a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development

Additional areas for training for professional development include:

- Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

- 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; and
- Maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

Written Notice To Staff

The Superintendent or designee annually will provide written information to all District employees about Mansfield Public School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, including sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by staff, in the Mansfield Public School staff handbook. Should any changes be made to the written plan during the school year, the most current version will be posted on the Mansfield Public Schools website.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Identifying Resources

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, student aggressors, families, and others are addressed. The Bullying Prevention Committee, surveys of parent, staff and students, and the PBIS teams provide data to help identify our school and district need and capacity to identify and provide resources, counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families.

1. **School administrators** annually review current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on early interventions and intensive services.
2. The annual mapping of resources is the first step toward recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps.
3. Annually, MPS adopts new curricula, reorganizes staff, and establishes school-based safety planning teams (**Crisis Teams**) and identifies other agencies that can provide services.
4. The **Bullying Prevention Committee** designs and updates the local processes for identifying existing and needed resources. Any Mansfield Public School student who reports being bullied or has been reported for bullying, will be referred to the appropriate counselor. The counselor will assess the issue(s) and if appropriate will provide the student with ongoing emotional support and coping strategies. The counselor, in conjunction with the building administration, may refer those students and/or appropriate family members to outside agencies for more intensive services.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

When necessary, the counselor will connect the student with a Principal or assistant Principal who will assume responsibility for dealing with any administrative needs associated with the issues.

Counseling And Other Services

A list of staff and services within our district that are culturally and linguistically appropriate resources is available to all students and their families. These resources may assist schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, providing social skill programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. We consider current tools including, but not limited to, behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula for targets, student aggressors and their families.

1. Adjustment counselors, guidance counselors and/or school psychologists are available for individual counseling at all school levels. Social skills groups and lessons are developed on an as needed basis for individual students.
2. System wide, the counseling staff works with the ELL teachers if assistance were needed to identify culturally and linguistically appropriate resources within the school and district.
3. Use of school counselors in conjunction with administration assist in creating plans for targets/aggressors to cohabitate within the confines of the school to receive their education.
4. Research and identify evidence-based programs assist with providing counseling through either groups and/or individual counseling depending on the needs of the students.
5. Research/identify appropriate evidence-based prevention programs for high school students that will help to promote pro-social behavior. Implementing these educational/social training programs create an environment of tolerance and acceptance of peers' differences that will help to promote a culture where students will not allow bullying/aggression towards peers or at least empower them to report/speak up about incidents of which they are aware.
6. Mansfield Public Schools provide one-on-one counseling and small group counseling to assist students.
7. With the implementation of small group guidance, creating/identifying a curriculum to address concerns relating to positive behavior, consequences of bullying and increasing awareness of resources available to students.

Students with Disabilities

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 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.

1. SECTION 7 Requirements for Students with Disabilities "For students identified

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

with a disability on the autism spectrum, the IEP Team *must* consider and specifically address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. (See M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010.)

2. Whenever the IEP Team evaluation indicates that a student's disability affects social skills development, or when the student's disability makes him or her vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing, the IEP must address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

Referral To Outside Services

Referrals to outside service providers are made when deemed appropriate, according to protocols established by the district. The **Bullying Prevention Committee** updates and maintains a list of local and state agencies as well as private therapists. Referrals to the Department of Child and Families may be initiated as deemed appropriate, and support from the Mansfield Police Department is initiated as needed.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The law requires that Mansfield Public Schools provides age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's or district's curricula. Curricula must be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development.

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 or school staff 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 engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts

Teachers in the Mansfield Public Schools employ the following approaches that are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment and that underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectations school and classroom routines;

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- Using positive behavioral supports;
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- Using the Internet safely; and
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

V. REPORTING BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Staff, students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student should report it to the designated school administrator.

Reports made by Staff

Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing. Staff members will report to the building 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 or designee is the alleged aggressor, or any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. The requirement to report as required does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral and disciplinary incidents consistent with school or collaborative policies and procedures for behavior management or discipline.

Reports made by Students, Parents/Guardians or Others

Students, parents/guardians, or others are expected to report any instance of bullying or retaliation s/he becomes aware of or witnesses to the building Principal or designee. Reports should be made to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the School Committee when the Superintendent or designee 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 will be provided practical, safe, private, and developmentally appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying or retaliation with a staff member.

An Incident Report Form should be completed and submitted to the school's main office to an identified school staff member or to the attention of one of the school administrators listed below who will investigate the reported bullying incident. Students, parents/guardians and others may

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report.

Incident Report Forms can be found in the main office, nurse's office, and guidance office at each school and on the District website (www.mansfieldschools.com). The Incident Report Form also is available in Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish, which are the most prevalent languages besides English spoken in the Mansfield Schools.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The Mansfield Public School includes a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets; it is made available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and posted it on the school's website. (www.mansfieldschools.com)

The address, phone number for the main office and school administrators are provided below to better assist in the filing and handling of any reported bullying incidences.

Roland Green Preschool

29 Dean Street

Mansfield MA 02048

508-261-1561

Administrator: Joanne Jordan joanne.jordan@mansfieldschools.com

Robinson School

245 East Street

Mansfield, MA 02048

508-261-7510

Administrators:

Kerri Sankey kerri.sankey@mansfieldschools.com

Joanne Jordan joanne.jordan@mansfieldschools.com

Tara Boening tara.boening@mansfieldschools.com

Jordan/Jackson School

255 East Street

Mansfield, MA 02048

508-261-7520

Administrators:

John Nieratko john.nieratko@mansfieldschools.com

Sarah McCracken sarah.mccracken@mansfieldschools.com

Nathan Thorsteinson nathan.thorsteinson@mansfieldschools.com

Qualters Middle School

240 East Street

Mansfield, MA 02048

508-261-7530

Administrators:

Mansfield Public Schools

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

Suzanne Ryan suzanne.ryan@mansfieldschools.com
Mark DeGirolamo mark.degirolamo@mansfieldschools.com
David McGovern david.mcgovern@mansfieldschools.com

Mansfield High School

250 East Street
Mansfield, MA 02048
508-261-7540

Administrators:

Michael Connolly michael.connolly@mansfieldschools.com
Mary Watkins mary.watkins@mansfieldschools.com
Dawn Stockwell dawn.stockwell@mansfieldschools.com

Superintendent's Office

2 Park Row Mansfield, MA 02048
508-261-7500

Administrators:

Superintendent of Schools - Zeffo Gianetti zeffo.gianetti@mansfieldschools.com
Asst. Superintendent of Schools - Teresa Murphy teresa.murphy@mansfieldschools.com
Director of Finance and Operations - Edward Vozzella Edward.vozzella@mansfieldschools.com

**VI. RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF BULLYING OR RETALIATION -
ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING BY A STUDENT**

The building Principal or designee will first assess the safety needs of the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. The building Principal or designee work with staff to create a personal safety plan; assign seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identify a staff member (in most cases it will be the guidance counselor) who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule so that there is no access to the target. The administrator alerts the parents/guardians about the safety plan as needed. When a safety plan is set up, the administrator begins a full investigation into the allegations of bullying or retaliation. The building Principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary to protect a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Obligations to Notify Others

All communications in notifying others will be in accordance with local, state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Parents/Guardians

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Principal or designee

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

contacts parents or guardians prior to an investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Another School or District

If the reported incident involves student 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 in notifying others will be in accordance with local, state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

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 School Resource Officer (SRO), who will coordinate the notification to the Mansfield Police Department. In making this determination, the building Principal will, consistent with the plan and with applicable MPS policies and procedures, consult with the School Resource Officer and as necessary with the Superintendent or designee.

Investigation

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

During the investigation the Principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the Principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the Principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the Principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation. The procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation align with the disciplinary guidelines and procedures as outlined in the student handbooks.

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

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

designee will take reasonably calculated steps 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.

The building Principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

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

The Principal or designee will inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

Responses to Bullying

Teaching Appropriate Behaviors through Skill Building

Upon the Principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Mansfield Public School uses a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to review and teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the Principal or designee may consider include:

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

Taking Disciplinary Action

If the Principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the school's or district's Code of Conduct. Discipline and disciplinary actions used in the Mansfield Public Schools are provided in the most current Student Handbooks for each school.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The Principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the Principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

VII. RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF BULLYING — ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING BY SCHOOL STAFF

Upon receipt of a report of alleged bullying of a student by school staff, **the School Principal or designee** will take appropriate actions in accordance with this Plan and other applicable district policies and procedures, including providing for the safety of the alleged target where necessary. If the Principal is the alleged aggressor, then **the Superintendent/designee** will take such actions. In the event the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, **the School Committee/designee** will take such actions.

A staff member who is the subject of a complaint of a serious nature will be informed promptly and will be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as he/she sees them, in accordance with district policies and procedures, including any applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation by staff are consistent with district policies and procedures for investigations of other alleged misconduct by staff. If necessary, the designated school official will consult with legal counsel about such procedures. Investigations may include interviews of staff, students and others as deemed appropriate. School officials will remind individuals (1) that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action and (2) of the importance of being truthful. To the extent practicable given their obligation to investigate and address the allegations at issue, the school officials will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process.

In the event a designated school official determines that the staff member has engaged in bullying of or retaliation against a student, the student's parent/guardian will be notified of what action is being taken to prevent further such acts and to restore the student's sense of safety. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of personnel records, the school official will not report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about any disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

In the event disciplinary action against an employee is under consideration, appropriate due process will be provided. Any disciplinary action imposed will be based upon facts found by the designated school official and appropriate standards and expectations in light of the employee's role and responsibilities. School officials will develop a method to record confirmed acts of bullying by staff.

VIII. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Parent Education And Resources

Mansfield has a strong tradition of active and engaged parent involvement in our schools, and parent/guardian participation is a crucial element in the success of this Plan.

The Mansfield Public Schools offers programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. Such parent education programs will be offered in collaboration with parent organizations such as the Mansfield Elementary Schools Association (MESA) and the QMS Parent Advisory Council (QMS PAC), the School Councils, and the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC), and are publicized through the district website and through the various parent organizations. The Bully Prevention Committee supports the school efforts to provide parent education and all available resources. The goal will be to collaborate with parent groups such as the Mansfield Elementary School Association, QMS Parent Advisory Council, SEPAC, and the school councils at each school in the planning of parent education programs. Roland Green provides parent training to families in the home setting to help develop parenting skills.

The Mansfield Public Schools' website includes bullying prevention and intervention resources. Bullying-related printed materials will be available in all schools for families to access.

IX. PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent's office.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Mansfield Public School District, no person will be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, gender identity, disability, housing status, or sexual orientation. Nothing in this 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.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

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, 37H½, or 37¾, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Mansfield Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan covers the behavior.

Revised: January 26, 2016
 October 7, 2014