



## Anti-Bullying Policy

The Washington-Parks Academy (the “Academy”) Board of Directors recognizes that a safe and respectful environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve academic success. The Academy finds that bullying, like other disruptive or unacceptable behavior, is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe and unthreatening environment.

The Academy’s Board of Directors thus delegates to the Principal the responsibility to notify all students of the Academy and employees of the Educational Service Provider of this policy and to create any related administrative procedures necessary to properly implement and ensure compliance with this policy.

The Academy’s Board of Directors also requires the Principal to annually disseminate the policy to all Academy staff, students, and parents and to include this policy in the student handbook. The Educational Service Provider shall likewise incorporate information regarding the policy against bullying into each of its employee training programs and employee handbooks.

This policy applies to all “at school” activities in the Academy, defined as: in a classroom, elsewhere on Academy premises, on an Academy bus or other Academy-related vehicle, or at an Academy-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on Academy premises. “At school” includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off Academy premises if the telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider is owned by, supported, or otherwise under the control of the Academy.

### I. Definitions

- A. “Bullying” means any written, verbal, implied, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is deemed by the Educational Service Provider as likely to threaten or harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:
- i. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, safety, or programs of one or more pupils.
  - ii. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the Academy’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
  - iii. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
  - iv. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the Academy.

B. “Cyberbullying” means any electronic communication that is deemed by the Educational Service Provider likely to threaten or harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- i. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, safety, or programs of

- 1 or more pupils.
  - ii. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the Academy’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
  - iii. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
  - iv. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the Academy.
- C. “Restorative practices” means that term as defined in MCL 380.1310c.
- D. “Telecommunications access device” and “telecommunications service provider” mean those terms as defined in MCL 750.219a.

## **II. Prohibition**

All students are protected under this policy, and the Academy’s Board of Directors endorsed the prohibition of bullying, which includes cyberbullying, of all students, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus. The Academy’s Board of Directors also endorses the prohibition of any form of retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with reliable information about an act of bullying. Students who are found in violation of this policy are subject to discipline as found in the student code of conduct, up to expulsion.

## **III. Confidentiality**

The Academy shall maintain the confidentiality of any individual who reports an act of bullying. The Academy’s Board of Directors thus delegates to the Principal the responsibility of creating and enforcing any administrative procedures necessary to ensure such confidentiality is preserved. To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, the Academy shall maintain confidentiality during the investigation process. Only personnel directly involved in the investigation of the complaint or responsible for remedying any violations will be provided access to the identity of any reporting individual, and then only to the extent necessary to effectively deal with the situation. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

## **IV. Procedure for Reporting Bullying**

Any student who believes she/he/other has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other inappropriate behavior, as defined by the Education Service Provider, should immediately report the situation to the Principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the Principal should be filed with the Education Service Provider and the Board of Directors. Complaints against the Education Service Provider CEO should be filed with the Board President.

A student may also submit a report or complaint to any of the above-designated individuals through email,

voicemail, regular mail or by leaving a sealed note addressed to the individual at that person's office or desk. The student may submit a report or complaint anonymously, but this may affect the ability to fully investigate the matter when the complaining student is not available to provide additional information during the course of the investigation.

#### **V. Prompt Investigation**

The Principal or other designated administrator shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive behavior, or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit.

#### **VI. Notification**

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified, by appropriate Legal Counsel at the behest the responsible Administrative Authority, of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements.

#### **VII. Documentation**

Those responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive behavior, or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Education Service Provider CEO. The CEO shall submit a compiled report to the Board of Directors once the specific incident has been completed and closed. The Academy shall report incidents of bullying to the Department of Education on an annual basis according to the form and procedures established by the Department of Education.