

**CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES ON
PREVENTION OF BULLYING**

I. Introduction

The Cambridge Public Schools is committed to creating a safe learning environment for all students and strictly enforces a prohibition against bullying of any of its students by anyone.

II. Prevention Measures

1. The Cambridge Public Schools through the central office and principals will take the necessary steps to ensure school staff are provided with training on how to recognize bullying and the effects of bullying on victims, bystanders and on individuals who bully.

2. The Cambridge Public Schools through the central office will take the necessary steps to ensure that resources are made available to schools on bullying prevention.

3. The Cambridge Public Schools through the central office and principals will take the necessary steps to ensure that materials on bullying are made available to parents/guardians and that parents/guardians are afforded opportunities to learn how to recognize bullying and understand its effects on targets, bystanders and on individuals who bully.

4. The Cambridge Public Schools through the central office and principals will take the necessary steps to ensure that students and school staff and school volunteers are provided on an annual basis with information about bullying and its effects on targets, bystanders and individuals who bully, and the process for reporting complaints of bullying.

5. The principal of each school will take steps to raise awareness about the harmful effects of bullying. Examples of steps that may be taken include but are not limited to the following: (i) including a summary of the anti-bullying policy in all student handbooks, (ii) developing school and class rules that prohibit bullying and retaliation against those who report incidents of bullying, (iii) providing opportunities for class discussion about bullying, and (iv) having posters displayed in schools that summarize the prohibition against bullying and retaliation against those who report incidents of bullying and the process for reporting complaints of bullying.

6. School staff are expected to supervise students in all areas of school and playground, to watch for signs of bullying and intervene to stop such conduct.

III. Reporting Complaints of Bullying

If any student or parent/guardian of a student believes that the student has been subjected to bullying, he or she should bring the matter to the attention of the assistant principal, small learning community administrator or principal of the school where the child attends. This may be done verbally or in writing.

If the student or parent/guardian of a student is unable to resolve the concern by working in cooperation with the student's teacher and the assistant principal or small learning community administrator and principal of the school and/or other school staff deemed appropriate by the school principal, the student or parent/guardian may file a written complaint with the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. The Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning will investigate the allegation in accordance with the provisions set forth below in Section IV.

IV. Complaint Investigation

When the Cambridge Public Schools receives a complaint of bullying, it will investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner and will strive to complete all investigations within ten (10) days of receiving the complaint. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation may include an interview with the student or parent/guardian filing the complaint, the student alleged to be a victim of bullying, the student alleged to have committed the bullying, witnesses to any alleged incidents or other individuals as determined by the school department.

V. Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed, the Cambridge Public Schools will take action that is appropriate under the circumstances. Action for students who are found to have engaged in bullying may range from requiring the offender to work with school personnel on better behavior, recommendation of counseling, support services or other therapeutic interventions and/or disciplinary consequences up to and including court involvement, or school-related discipline consistent with the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* up to and including expulsion. Additionally, the Cambridge Public Schools may, as appropriate, recommend counseling, support services or other therapeutic interventions to victims of bullying.

VI. Other Complaint Processes Also Available

It should be noted that the provisions of these administrative procedures and guidelines do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in the Cambridge Public Schools "Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual

Harassment Policy” to seek resolution of any complaints of discrimination or harassment that is based on a characteristic protected by law such as sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation. It also should be noted that the provisions of this section do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in Section 23.0 of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* to seek resolution of any complaints regarding a student’s deprivation of rights set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

Adopted by Cambridge School Committee on October 5, 2004
Finalized version issued on October 12, 2004