

Adopted: September 16, 2010

Revised: March 19, 2014, December 19, 2018 (update to legal ref.)

BLUESKY CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY No. 5.4.2 BULLYING PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

I. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of BlueSky Charter School to define acts of bullying and to clearly delineate the consequences of bullying behavior.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

BlueSky Charter School is committed to making BlueSky Charter School a safe and caring environment for all students. We will treat each other with respect and refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind. We will endeavor to be kind and respectful in our interactions with others. It is especially important for adults to model these behaviors (even when disciplining) in order to provide positive examples for student behavior.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. The term “bullying” means any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including cyber bullying, i.e., acts transmitted through the use of internet, cell phone, or other electronic device) that is or is likely to be reasonably perceived as being intimidating, mocking, belittling, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or is otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Hurting another physically by hitting, kicking, tripping, or pushing;
2. Stealing or damaging another person’s things;
3. Ganging up on another person;
4. Teasing another person in a hurtful way;
5. Calling another person hurtful names;
6. Using put-downs, such as insulting another person’s race, making fun of another person because of their characteristics as a boy or girl, or denigrating another person for other personal characteristics;

This policy does not constitute legal advice; any questions regarding this policy should be directed to your attorney.

7. Spreading rumors or untruths about another person.

IV. THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

- A. This policy applies to school related bullying wherever it occurs, including:
 1. On BlueSky Charter School grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
 2. At a school activity, function, or event, including field trips and other school activities which take place off of school grounds;
 3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event; or
 4. On school computers or other equipment.
- B. Off campus student behavior, including behavior on computers, cell phones, or other electronic devices whether at home or in other places is subject to consequences under this policy if the behavior creates a material and substantial disruption of the educational process at school for one or more students.

V. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

BlueSky Charter School students must not bully others, must not be a bystander to bullying, and must report bullying to an adult. Students are expected to do the following:

- A. Treat others with kindness and respect;
- B. Refuse to bully others;
- C. Refuse to let others be bullied;
- D. Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied;
- E. Try to include everyone in activities, especially those who are often left out;
- F. Report bullying to an adult.

VI. STAFF EXPECTATIONS

Teachers and staff at BlueSky Charter School are expected to do the following things to prevent bullying and help children feel safe at school:

- A. Closely supervise students in all areas of the school;

- B. Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens;
- C. Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports using an appropriate response process;
- D. Report bullying to the BlueSky Charter School principal;
- E. Notify the executive director when efforts to address the bullying prove unsuccessful;
- F. Help create a school culture of respect and kindness by modeling and fostering these traits.

VII. EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

BlueSky Charter School administrators are expected to foster a school culture of respect and kindness. Administrators are expected to oversee the following, at a minimum:

- A. Identify and schedule appropriate staff training opportunities on the topic of bullying prevention;
- B. Use annual parent surveys or other appropriate methods to obtain from stakeholders input relevant to the topic of bullying prevention at BlueSky Charter School;

VIII. CONSEQUENCES

- A. Depending on the severity and nature of the bullying, BlueSky Charter School will take one or more of the following steps, as appropriate:
 1. Intervention, Warning, and Redirection. A teacher, principal, or staff member will ensure that the immediate behavior stops and reinforce to the student that bullying will not be tolerated. The staff member will redirect the student and may help the student identify better choices the student can make in the future.
 2. Notification of Parents. School staff will notify the parents of involved students. The parents may be asked to meet with the principal or other members of the school staff, including the student's teacher and/or the school counselor.
 3. Resolution with the Target of the Bullying. A student who violates this policy may be required to participate in appropriate resolution, e.g., writing a letter of apology to the student who was bullied, participating in peer mediation, etc.
 4. Referral to Professional School Support Staff. A student who violates this policy may be asked to meet with a school counselor or other staff to work on positive behavioral interventions to help prevent future violations.

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5. Loss of School Privileges. The student may lose school privileges, or be suspended, as appropriate.
6. Suspension/ Expulsion. In cases of severe or repeated bullying, the student may be suspended or expelled.
7. Staff Consequences. A BlueSky Charter School employee who fails to immediately and appropriately address bullying may be asked to participate in additional staff training or may be mentored. A staff member's repeated failure to address bullying behavior may result in discipline up to and including discharge, as appropriate.

IX. RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED

The school board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation will be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

X. FALSE REPORTS AS A MEANS OF BULLYING PROHIBITED

- A. The school board prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school student found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
- B. A school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying is subject to appropriate discipline ranging from a letter of reprimand up to including discharge, as appropriate.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. §124E (Charter School Law)
Minn. Stat. §121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. §120B.232 (Character Development Education)
Minn. Stat. §§121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)