

# Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

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## Riverside School

\*The Riverside School policy prohibits bullying as defined by M.G.L., c. 71, § 370

Riverside Community Care

Revised 8/2023

**RIVERSIDE SCHOOL**

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### I. DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to work collaboratively and ensure that all parties are working together to prevent and intervene on all acts of bullying, it is necessary for all involved to use common language. The following definitions are provided to assist in meeting this goal.

**Aggressor:** is a student or member of the school staff, including but not limited to administrators, educators, teacher assistants, clinicians, interns and support staff who engages in any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

**Bullying:** as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property.
- ii. Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property.
- iii. Creates a hostile environment as school for the target.
- iv. Infringes on the rights of the target at school or,
- v. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process of the orderly operation of a school.

**Cyberbullying:** means bullying through the use of technology or any other form of electronic communication. This may include but will not be limited to any transfer of writing, images, sounds, or data through internet communication, email, instant message, text messages or social media platforms. Cyber-bullying also encompasses any creation of blogs, web pages or social media profiles in which someone assumes the identity of another and knowingly impersonates them. See in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 for the full legal definition.

**Hostile Environment:** as defined by in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation:** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who report bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**School Staff:** includes but is not limited to administrators, educators, teacher assistants, clinicians, interns, custodians, bus drivers and support staff.

**Target:** is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

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### I. LEADERSHIP

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in the development and implementation of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention plan. This holds true within the context of the whole school as well as in the greater community to promote a positive school climate. As leaders, we have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and to promote an understanding and respect for diversity and differences. Leadership is defined as the entire school faculty, local community representatives, and the parent advisory committee. These leaders are responsible for setting priorities and for staying current on research and preventative measures to effectively respond to bullying. It is also the responsibility of leadership to involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing and implementing the plan.

- A. Public Involvement: (M.G.L. c71 sect 370) The Riverside School Plan is developed in consultation with all members of the school community including teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representative, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians. This plan will be evaluated, revised as needed, and presented to all parties yearly.
- B. Assessing Needs and Resources: The program director, in collaboration with families and staff, will regularly assess the adequacy of the current programs in place. This will include the following:
- Review of all current policies and procedures
  - Review of all available data on bullying and behavioral incidents
  - Assessment of all available resources, including but not limited to curricula, trainings, professional development, and available behavioral health services
  - Research and reading of all current/relevant articles that address all types of bullying and how to both prevent and address
  - Each year the Riverside School will collect and analyze any and all data on bullying as a way to assess and refine current practices
  - Administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) survey (every 4 years) to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our school.
  - Annual reporting of any bullying incidents to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

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- C. Planning and Oversight: The director or designee, in conjunction with the quality department, will be responsible for receiving reports on bullying, collecting and analyzing data, recording and tracking incidents, as well as developing and/or revising current policies and protocols (including internet safety policies). The program director or designee will be responsible for implementing all new and/or revised policies.

The Program Director, along with all school staff members, will review policies and plans for ongoing professional development and supports needed to do the following:

- Respond to the needs of target
- Respond to the need of aggressor
- Implement, assess and revise necessary curricula
- Amend student and staff handbook, and code of conduct
- Ensure a no tolerance stance to bullying for both staff and students

Each year, the Program Director is responsible for reviewing and updating the plan as needed. In addition, the Director along with school staff, will lead parent efforts in collaboration towards reviewing and updating the overall plan.

- D. Priority Statement: The Riverside School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and productive educational environment free from bullying for all students and staff.

The Riverside School is dedicated to creating an educational environment that is free from bullying for all students, including students who may be more vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing based on: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, disability, or association with an individual who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

To ensure safety and adherence to the plans and protocols, students will be provided with a highly structured therapeutic setting with access to clinical staff. Student's will participate in ongoing therapy groups such as Coping with Conflict, as well as receive direct instruction in social pragmatics and cooperative activities. In addition, both staff and students will receive instruction and updates in regards to personal human rights.

At the Riverside School we are committed to providing a place where students are able to experience personal growth and achieve their highest academic potential free of fear, harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation. As such, we will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior in our school building, on school grounds or within school-related activities.

The Riverside School will investigate promptly all reports and/or complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. Prompt action will be taken to end the reported behavior and restore a sense of safety to both the target and the overall community. We will support this commitment within all aspects of our school community. This includes relevant curricula and

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instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying. The Riverside School is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community as a whole to prevent issues of violence. In full consultation with these constituencies, we have established this plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation.

The Program Director is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the plan except when a reported bullying incident involves the Director as the alleged aggressor. In such cases the Quality Management Department shall be responsible for investigating the report and taking the steps necessary to implement the plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

## II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Riverside School will meet the requirement of M.G.L. c.71, § 370 to provide ongoing professional development for all staff including but not limited to administrators, educators, teacher assistants, clinicians, interns and support staff.

- A. Annual Staff Training: Annual training for all Riverside School staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps the Program Director or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades within the Riverside School.

Staff member hired after the start of the school year will be required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

The Program Director or designee will oversee the professional development plans of all staff who work with students. The Director or designee will be responsible for annual training of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for all school staff. Effective Spring 2017, Riverside School will use the MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center) as the primary curriculum for training staff in Bully Prevention and Intervention.

- B. Ongoing Professional Development: At the Riverside School the goal of Professional Development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for all school personnel to create a climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for all individual differences. Professional development will build upon the skills of staff members

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to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c.71 section 370, the content of school wide professional development will be informed by research and will include but not be limited to:

- Age/Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying
- Age/developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
- Necessary information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target and witness
- Research on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment
- The incidence and nature of cyberbullying
- Internet safety issues as they related to cyberbullying

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a focus on the needs of students with autism or students who disability affects social skills development. Additional professional development will include:

- Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
- Fostering an understanding of respect for diversity and race
- Building relationships and communicating with families
- Constructively managing classroom behavior
- Using positive behavioral intervention strategies
- Applying constructive disciplinary practices
- Ways to teacher student's skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
- Ways to engage students in school or classroom planning and decision making
- Instruction on maintaining a safe and caring classroom
- Fostering staff engagement in oversight and implementation of the Plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors designed to correct misconduct and bullying behaviors, and instill accountability in the community

- C. Written Notice to Staff: This school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan including sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by school staff. Training and review will be provided yearly.

### III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES



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A. Resources: A primary aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, student aggressors, families and others are addressed. Resources for targets, aggressors, and their families may include but are not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United for Human Rights: Bringing Human Rights to Life</li> <li>• Helpguide.org Conflict Resolution Skills</li> <li>• Pacer: We Will Curriculum</li> <li>• Access to Clinical Staff</li> <li>• Stopbullying.gov</li> <li>• Riverside Emergency Services</li> <li>• Good Character: Character Education—Live Wire Media</li> <li>• Personal Growth and Development Groups</li> <li>• CDC: Measuring Bullying Victimization, Perpetration, and Bystander Experiences: assessment tools</li> <li>• Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center: A Guide for Parents</li> <li>• Mutual Respect Contract</li> <li>• Mothers Against Teen Violence: <a href="http://www.matvinc.org">www.matvinc.org</a></li> <li>• ERIC-Educational Resource Information Center: <a href="http://www.eric.ed.gov">www.eric.ed.gov</a></li> <li>• Take Action Against Bullying: <a href="http://www.bullybeware.com">www.bullybeware.com</a></li> <li>• Stop Bullying Now: <a href="http://www.stopbullyingnow.com">www.stopbullyingnow.com</a></li> <li>• A Call to Stop Bullying: Stop bullying: <a href="http://stopbullying.gov/">http://stopbullying.gov/</a></li> <li>• Generation On: <a href="http://www.generationon.org">http://www.generationon.org</a></li> <li>• Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center: <a href="http://www.marccenter.webs.com">http://www.marccenter.webs.com</a></li> </ul>	<p>Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Carlos is Gonna Get it</i> by Even Emerson</li> <li>• <i>The Skin I'm In</i> by Sharon Flake</li> <li>• <i>The Misfits</i> by James Howe</li> <li>• <i>The Revealers</i> by Doug Wilhelm</li> <li>• <i>The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian</i> by Sherman Alexie</li> <li>• <i>Speak</i> by Laurie Anderson</li> </ul>
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All students will have access to the above resources and will participate in weekly Clinical Groups and activities in Social Skills, such as MemEmotion and Coffee Talk to address the need area. In addition, each student will be assigned a clinician that they will meet with a minimum of 1 hour per week.

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- B. Counseling and other services: Licensed clinicians, consulting psychiatrist, nurse consult, as well as other support staff are identified resources for students and their families. Each student is assigned a school clinician who is responsible for development of safety plans, identifying needs for social skills groups, needs for individually focused interventions, and assisting with the Bully prevention intervention services for all students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, or that are exhibiting bullying behaviors. If culturally and linguistically appropriate resources will be located outside of the current school environment, then referrals will be made through the Riverside Community Care Outreach Services and/or Riverside's Risk Management Team.
- C. Students with disabilities: As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, and 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.
- D. Student with Protected Status: The Riverside School recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics including, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 2 or more of these characteristics.
- E. Referral to Outside Services: The Riverside School is part of Riverside Community Care, which provides community outreach services that may be utilized if appropriate. In addition, families have access to the schools Master's level clinical staff.

#### IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The law requires each school or district to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention that is incorporated into school curricula. Curricula will be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives and focused strategies for both bullying prevention and social skills development.

- A. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches: Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research, adhere to evidence-based standards, and utilize age-appropriate instruction. Instruction will emphasize the following areas:
- Human Rights Training

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- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students or school staff engaging in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying, including the underlying power of imbalance
- Emphasizing safe and appropriate use of electronic communication and technologies
- Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communication
- Engaging students in a safe and supported school environment that is respectful of human rights and diversity
- Use of technology, scripts, and role play to develop skills
- Teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

B. General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts: The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectation for students and establishing school and classroom routines
- 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
- Support of students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

## V. **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

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- A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation: Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents/guardians, or others. The Riverside School will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, contact mailbox and e-mail address, online access, as well as the Riverside Consumer and Human Rights complaint system. All reports can be made orally or in writing. Additionally, all oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing.

In the event of witnessing or becoming aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation, all school staff members are required to report immediately to the Program Director or designee. If the Program Director or designee is the alleged aggressor, a school staff member, who witnesses or becomes aware of bullying/retaliation, is required to report immediately to the Vice President of Child and Family Services (CFS) and the Human Rights Advocate.

Any report of bullying or retaliation made by a student, parent, guardian, or other individual who are not school staff members, may be made anonymously.

In addition, use of an Incident Reporting Form is required as a condition of making a report. When a report is made, the school will:

- Include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the intake packets for students and parents or guardians
- Make the copy available in the Director or Clinical officer, and any other locations determined by the Program Director or designee
- Post the Incident Reporting Form on the school's website. The form will be made available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians
- Will report, via electronic submission, to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regarding the incident

Annually, the school will provide the school community, including but not limited to educators, administrators, nurse consult, facilities, all school staff, students, parents or guardians, interns and consults with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Director or designee and the human rights officer will be incorporated into the handbook, on the school website, and within the plan made available to parents and guardians.

Reporting by staff: When a staff member witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation, the staff member will report immediately to the Program Director or designee. If the Program Director or designee is the alleged aggressor, then the staff member will report to the Human Rights Officer. The requirement to report as provided does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or

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disciplinary incidents consistent with the school or agency policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

Reporting by Students, Parents, Guardians: The school expects students, parents, guardians or others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Director, designee or human rights officer when the Director or designee is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, however no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents, guardians, or others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Additionally, students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss any incidence of bullying with a staff member, Vice-President of Child and Family Services (CFS), or human rights officer when the alleged aggressor is the Director or designee.

B. Responding To a Report of Bullying or Retaliation—Allegation of Bullying by a Student:

- **Safety:** Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Director or designee will take steps to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to:
  - Clinical support
  - Creating a personal safety plan
  - Pre-determining grouping arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus
  - Identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target
  - Altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target

The Director or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. Furthermore, the Director or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting a student from bullying or retaliation, who has reported bullying or retaliation, has witnessed bullying or retaliation, who provides information during an investigation, or who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

- **Obligation to Notify Others—Notice to Parents or Guardians:** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Director or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of both the target and aggressor, as well as the procedures for responding. There may be circumstances in which the Director or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to an investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulation 603 CMR 49.00.
- **Obligation to Notify Others—Notice to Another School or District:** If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-

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public school, approved special education day school, residential school, or collaborative school, the Director or designee will promptly notify, by phone, the Principal or designee of the other school(s), so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, as well as, 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 Director or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Director will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Additionally, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled on the school, the Director or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if they have a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

The director will work closely and collaborate with the Vice President of Child and Families Service Division, Director of Quality Management, and any other individuals the Director or designee deems appropriate. Additionally, all applicable school policies and procedures will be consulted and followed.

- C. **Investigation:** The Director or designee, in conjunction with the Quality Management department, will promptly investigate 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 Director or designee, along with the Clinical Coordinator or designee, will, in addition to following all protocols and procedures, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents, guardians, and any other persons deemed necessary. The Director or designee will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses about the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

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

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All procedure for investigating reports of bullying a retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Director or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

- D. Determinations: The Director or designee will make a determination based upon all the facts and circumstances. If, after an investigation, the bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Director or designee will take steps to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefitting from school activities. The Director or designee will determine what remedial action is required, if any, and determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the Director or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or clinical team, 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 Director or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor regarding the results of the investigation. If evidence of bullying or retaliation is found, the director or designee will outline what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying and retaliation. All notification to parents or guardians must comply with application state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Due to the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Director 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 Director or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

E. Responses to Bullying

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills Building: Upon the Director or designee determining that bullying or retaliation occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 (d)(v). Skill building approaches that the Director or designee may consider include:

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- Offer individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula
- Provide relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with clinicians and other appropriate school personnel
- Implement a range of academic and non-academic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals
- Meet with parents and/or guardians to engage in parental support and reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home
- Adopt behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills
- Make a referral for evaluation

2. Taking Disciplinary Action: If the Director or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Director or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teacher of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school or districts code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

If the Director or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others: The director 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. This may include increasing 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 Director 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 necessary, the Director or designee will work with appropriate school staff to immediately implement.

- F. Responding to Report of Bullying by School Staff

At the Riverside School, we are committed to providing a safe environment free of fear, harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying and/or retaliation. The Riverside School will not tolerate any unlawful or inappropriate behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation by a staff member. All complaints and/or reports of bullying,



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cyberbullying, or retaliation made against a staff member will be investigated promptly. Immediate action will be taken to end the behavior and restore the target's safety.

Any report of bullying by a school staff member may be made by a student either orally or in writing. All oral reports made will be recorded in writing. When a report is made, all staff are required to report to the Program Director or designee. If the Program Director or designee is the alleged aggressor, staff should report immediately to the Division Vice President and the Human Right Advocate. Reports may be made anonymously; however no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged staff member solely based on an anonymous report. The Riverside School will make a variety of reporting resources available to students. These include, but are not limited to, Process and Reports within the Parent/Student Handbook, online access via the school website, access to Riverside Schools human rights officer or Riverside Community Care's Human Rights Committee.

- **Safety:** Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation by a staff member, the Director or designee will take steps to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to:
  - Clinical support
  - Creating a personal safety plan
  - Pre-determining grouping arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus
  - Identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target
  - Altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target

The Director or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. Furthermore, the Director or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting a student from bullying or retaliation, who has reported bullying or retaliation by a staff member, has witnessed bullying or retaliation, who provides information during an investigation, or who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

- **Obligation to Notify Others—Notice to Parents or Guardians:** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Director or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of both the target, as well as the procedures for responding. There may be circumstances in which the Director or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to an investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulation 603 CMR 49.00.
- **Obligation to Notify Others—Notice to Another School or District:** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation by a staff member has occurred, the Director or designee will promptly notify, by telephone, the principal or designee of the targets sending school district regarding the incident. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

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- **Obligation to Notify Others—Notice to Law Enforcement:** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Director or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Director will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and established agreements with the local law enforcement agency.

The director will work closely and collaborate with the Vice President of Child and Families Service Division, Director of Quality Management, and any other individuals the Director or designee deems appropriate.

Investigation: The Director or designee, in conjunction with the Quality Management department, will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation by a staff member 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 Director or designee, along with the Clinical Coordinator or designee, will, in addition to following all protocols and procedures, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents, guardians, and any other persons deemed necessary. The Director or designee will remind the alleged staff aggressor, target, and witnesses about the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the Director or designee, other staff members as determined by the Director or designee, and in consultation with the Clinical Coordinator when appropriate. To the extent practicable and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the Director or designee and others involved in the investigation will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Director or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. A written record will also be kept Riverside's Quality Management Department.

All procedure for investigating reports of bullying a retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Director or designee will consult with human resources and legal counsel about the investigation.

Determinations: The Director or designee will make a determination based upon all the facts and circumstances. If, after an investigation, the bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Director or designee will take steps to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefitting from school activities. The Director or designee will determine what responsive or disciplinary action is necessary.

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The Director or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target regarding the results of the investigation. If evidence of bullying or retaliation is found, the director or designee will outline what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying and retaliation. Additionally, parents and/or guardians will be informed if a “stay away” order or other directive is put in place in order to report violations. All notification to parents or guardians must comply with application state and federal privacy laws and regulations.

The Director or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (DESE) problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

### VI. Collaboration with Families

- A. Parent Education and Resources: The Riverside School in collaboration with the Parent Advisory Committee will offer education programs for parents and guardians that focus on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the school. Furthermore, any additional necessary information or data will be shared with parents and guardians.
- B. Notification Requirements: Each school year the Program Director or designee will notify parents and guardians of enrolled students 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. The Riverside School will send parents and/or guardians written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school’s internet safety policy. All notices and information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats. Additionally, all forms will be made available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians.

### VII. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited:

- On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; at a school sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school; and
- At a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the Riverside School, of the acts create a hostile environment at school for targets or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

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Retaliation against a person who report bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited. As stated in M.G.L. c. 71 § 370, nothing in this Plan requires the Riverside School to staff any non-school related activities, functions or programs.

### **VIII. Problem Resolution System**

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the school, 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/prs/> or by phone at 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information will also be available in the Program Directors office.

### **IX. Relationship to Other Laws**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Riverside School, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a publicly funded school or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and course of study of such publicly funded school on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school 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.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2 and §§41 and 42, M.G.L. c. 75 §5, or other applicable laws, or school policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

## Massachusetts General Laws-Hazing

### Part IV Crimes, Punishments and Proceedings in Criminal Cases

#### Part IV – Title I – Chapter 269 – Section 17 – Hazing

“Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.”

#### Part IV – Title I – Chapter 269 – Section 18 – Hazing

“Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

#### Part IV – Title I – Chapter 269 – Hazing

“Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution’s compliance with this section’s requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution’s recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in this case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institutions which fails to make such report.



**BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. **Check whether you are the:**  **Target of the behavior**  **Reporter (not the target)**

3. **Check whether you are a:**  **Student**  **Staff member (specify role)** \_\_\_\_\_  
 **Parent**  **Administrator**  **Other (specify)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your contact information/telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. **If student, state your local school:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. **If staff member, state your title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Information about the Incident:**

**Name of Target (of behavior):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s) of Incident(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time When Incident(s) Occurred:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible):** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. **Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.**

9. **Signature of Person Filing this Report:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

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**10: Form Given to:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date Received:** \_\_\_\_\_