

## ***Harassment***

Harassment of students is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the Academy to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property. Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough or is serious enough to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students. This would include such activities as stalking, bullying, name calling, taunting, hazing, and other disruptive behaviors. Any student that believes s/he has been or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher and the School Administrator. Complaints will be investigated accordingly following policy. Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above. If the investigation finds harassment occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment or participating in a harassment investigation is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above. The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

### **A. Harassment**

1. Submission to un-welcomed conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the Academy;
2. Submission to, or rejection of, the un-welcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel, or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions, or privileges of the school/Academy;
3. The unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

### **B. Sexual Harassment**, may include, but is not limited to:

1. verbal harassment or abuse;
2. pressure for sexual activity;
3. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
4. un-welcomed touching;
5. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
6. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, job, or performance of public duties.

*Note: Any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student will be guilty of criminal “child abuse” as defined in State law. M. C. L. A. 722.621 et. seq.*

### **C. Hazing**

The Board of Directors believe that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any school sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

1. illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs
2. physical punishment or infliction of pain
3. intentional humiliation or embarrassment
4. dangerous activity
5. activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress
6. forced detention or kidnapping
7. undressing or otherwise exposing

Note: If the school club or organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff is involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

### **D. Bullying-Matt's Safe School Law**

The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions to any student which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the school including activities on school property and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school sponsored, school approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

Bullying – intimidation of others by acts, such as (but not limited to) the following:

1. threatened or actual physical harm
2. un-welcomed physical contact
3. threatening or taunting verbal, written or electronic communications
4. taking or extorting money or property

5. damaging or destroying property
6. blocking or impeding student movement

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. This type of behavior is a form of harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats. Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior including bullying or hazing, should immediately report the situation to the building Principal/Superintendent. Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with reliable information about an act of bullying is prohibited. All adults working in the building are responsible for ensuring the safety of all students and enforcing this policy. The Principal/Superintendent will be responsible for follow up investigations, discipline, and notification to police, if necessary. In addition to the student handbook, the Cole Academy District Bullying Policy will be posted on the school website.

A student who engages in any act of bullying is subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, or referral to law enforcement officials.

**Cole Academy District Bullying Response follows current state guidelines (including cyberbullying):**

- permits anonymous reports of bullying by students and written identifiable reports of suspected bullying by the parent or guardian;
- requires teachers and other school staff to notify school administrators in writing of bullying acts they witness and students' reports they receive;
- requires the school administrator to investigate parents' or guardians' written reports and review students' anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of any anonymous report;
- requires the school to notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying and invite them to attend at least one meeting. The notice must describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying;
- requires the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurring perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline.

**Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategy:**

The District shall implement a prevention and intervention strategy which may include, but not limited to:

- Implementation of a positive behavioral intervention and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying identified by the Department of Education. (CHAMP)
- A school survey to determine the prevalence of bullying
- School rules prohibiting bullying, harassment, and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts
- Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom, locker rooms and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur

- Individual interventions with the bully, parents, and school staff, and interventions with the bullied child, parents, and the school staff
- School-wide training related to safe school climate

A comprehensive approach, involving everyone in the schools and the community, to address this issue at all school levels is essential to reducing incidences of bullying. Such an approach must involve proactive school-wide, classroom, and individual intervention. In addition, the norms that are established by adults through consistent enforcement of all policies pertaining to conduct and modeling appropriate behavior at school and at home will reduce the incidence of bullying. It is important and necessary to promote the concept that caring for others is a valued quality, one that is accepted and encouraged.

### **Confidentiality**

Every reasonable effort will be made to maintain confidentiality during any investigative process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations.