Bluestem Hall Nature School

Bullying Prevention Policy 26-27

Updated 9/25/26

1401 E Old Church Road

Urbana,IL 61802

school@bluestemhall.com

www.bluestemhall.com

Bullying, Including Cyber Bullying, is defined as:
any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1| Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property
2| Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health
3| Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance or
4| Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following:
harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

“Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the non-sectarian nonpublic school and is consistent with subsection (a-5) of this Section [free exercise of religion]. Nothing in this Section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or

religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

Bluestem Hall Nature School will not tolerate abusive behavior or bullying of any kind. We will absolutely never use physical punishment, bribery, threats, and other methods that would hurt, frighten, or humiliate children.

Procedures to report bullying of any kind:
Reports of bullying, confirmed or suspected, should be sent to Lead Teachers or Executive Director via email, phone call, or in person.

Executive Director contact information: school@bluestemhall.com

Lead Teachers and Executive Director are responsible for receiving such reports and will honor requests for anonymous reporting, however there may be no disciplinary action solely based on an anonymous report. Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights includes procedures or promptly informing parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

Restorative Measures
Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, includes procedures for promptly informing parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

“Restorative measures" means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that

- (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community,
- (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety,
- (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate,
- (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society,
- (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and
- (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an

understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

- (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Investigation:

When a report is received, school personnel will collaborate with parents and students to agree upon a course of action, working as quickly as possible to ensure students' safety, gather information, and clarify facts. An investigation may include the following:

- Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
- Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
- Notifying the principal or school administrator or his or her designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
- Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

School personnel will also give parents and students involved an opportunity to meet with the Lead Teacher and/or the school's Executive Director to discuss the investigation, the findings, and the actions taken to address any bullying found to have occurred.

Interventions that may be taken to address bullying include but are not limited to:

school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.

No Retaliation:

We prohibit reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying and the consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation. Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying will not be tolerated and will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining interventions and consequences according to this Policy.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if Bluestem Hall Nature School's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, There will be consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person found to have falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying.

Consequences:

If a student is determined to have engaged in bullying behavior, they will be subject to disciplinary actions appropriate to the offense, the student's age and past behavior, and the circumstances surrounding the events. Confirmed Bullying and/or retaliatory behavior will result in an initial consultation with the Lead teacher. If a behavioral situation escalates to the point that the classroom wellbeing is being compromised on a regular basis, we expect the full support and cooperation of that child's parents / guardians. Staff will help develop a plan to redirect inappropriate behavior with continued positive reinforcement. Should disruptive behavior not improve, we will schedule an Initial Consultation. This meeting would require the parent(s) of an enrolled child with chronic bullying/behavioral concerns to talk with the Lead Teacher to discuss the problem and together, establish solutions or goals for correcting the behavior. The Second Consultation would be established if the initial plan fails. Again, the parent(s) will be required to meet with the Lead Teacher and additionally the Executive Director. The problem will be identified, and a new approach will be outlined to correct the problem. Both consultations will be summarized by the Lead Teacher and presented for parent signature. After the Second Consultation and after having exhausted all resources including social services and behavior specialists (parent facilitation and financial support required), should progress not be achieved, we will begin a Transition Plan to relocate the student to another program.

Disciplinary actions will be thoughtfully taken in an attempt to promote student safety and well-being, change and improve behavior, and uphold the school's Mission, Philosophy, and Guiding Principles.

Regarding rude, mean, or bullying behaviors exhibited outside of school and among Bluestem Hall Nature School's students, teachers and administrators may get involved if students' actions impact the school experience, be it academic or social, for individuals or the community. In such instances,

school personnel will work thoughtfully with students and parents or guardians, to determine the best course of action.

Policy Evaluation:

The Lead Teacher shall assist the Executive Director with the evaluation and assessment of the policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, but is not limited to, factors such as:

1| The frequency of victimization.

2| Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school.

3| Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.

4| The types of bullying being utilized.

5| Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that Bluestem Hall Nature School already collects for other purposes.

This policy is fully consistent with Bluestem Hall Nature School’s other policies, and can be found on the school's website, student handbook, and faculty/staff handbook and will be distributed to parents, guardians, and students annually.

This Policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians. This Policy is reviewed and re-evaluated every two years under subsection (d) of this Section, contains a policy evaluation process to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation.

This policy is consistent with the policies of the nonpublic school.