



CARDINAL McCLOSKEY  
COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

## Anti-Bullying Policy

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and hazing of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School (“CMCCS”). An act of bullying, by either an individual or group of people in the CMCCS is expressly prohibited on the school’s property or at school-related functions or transportation to or from school. This policy applies not only to individuals who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to individuals who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another individual’s act of bullying. CMCCS is committed to protecting its students, employees, and applicants for admission from bullying, harassment, or discrimination for any reason and of any type. CMCCS and its Board believe that all students and employees are entitled to a safe, equitable, and harassment-free school experience. Bullying, harassment, violence, or discrimination will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action. CMCCS believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents, guardians, staff, and the school’s community partners, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-control. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for the community property on the part of students, staff, and community members. The standards of this policy constitute a specific, focused, coordinated, integrated, culturally sensitive system of supports for all students, staff, families and community agencies that will improve relations within CMCCS. Our staff have been trained and are supported in the school’s efforts to provide awareness, intervention training, and instructional strategies on prevention (including violence prevention) to each staff, parent, and student. We provide direct follow-up when incidents are reported and/or occur, which could include a referral to Child Protective Services and/or law enforcement as necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all parties. We will abide by the Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”). **All children have the right to attend school in a safe, welcoming, and caring environment. DASA specifically ensures this for New York State public school students.**

*The Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”) was signed into law on September 13, 2010. The legislation amended State Education Law by creating a new Article 2, Dignity for All Students, and revising Section 801-a regarding instruction in civility, citizenship, character education, tolerance, respect for others, and dignity. It combats bias-based bullying, harassment, and discrimination in public schools, and includes awareness and sensitivity in the relations of people including individuals of different races, weights, national origins, ethnicity, religions or religious practices,*

*mental or physical abilities, sexes, sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions.*

## **Definition of Bullying and Harassment**

"Harassment" and "bullying" shall mean the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Acts of harassment and bullying shall include, but not be limited to, those acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

Cyberbullying, which includes the above definition of bullying and harassment, takes place through any form of electronic communication.

## **Types of Bullying**

Bullying and harassment can take on a variety of forms including, but not limited to: verbal bullying, which includes spoken or written words; (ii) social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying; (iii) or physical bullying, which involves physically hurting a person's body or possessions.

Examples of verbal bullying include:

- Teasing
- Name-calling
- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Taunting
- Threatening to cause harm

Examples of social bullying include:

- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Telling other children not to be friends with someone
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Embarrassing someone in public

Examples of physical bullying includes:

- Hitting/kicking/pinching
- Spitting
- Tripping/pushing
- Taking or breaking someone's things
- Making mean or rude hand gestures

CMCCS recognizes that bullying is an inappropriate behavior that has destructive and negative effects on individual students and on the overall climate of the school. CMCCS believes that all students are entitled to a safe and secure learning environment; bullying works against the achievement of that goal. Bullying is a behavior that should never be tolerated. It is important that teachers, students, and parents take a stand against all bullying behaviors.

The CMCCS staff is committed to a policy that identifies and corrects those students who become involved in bullying behaviors. CMCCS expects that all students will refrain from becoming involved in any bullying behaviors. Failure to comply with these expectations will result in disciplinary action. In addition, it is expected that all bystanders (third party witnesses) will refrain from supporting bullying behaviors in either an active or passive manor and will report bullying behaviors to the appropriate authorities.

Each year CMCCS staff will educate students in all grade levels to help them identify and respond to the dangers of bullying.

**Students who become involved in bullying will be subject to the following:**

- A student who is bullied by another student should contact the Director of Operations or any adult (parent, teacher, or staff member). Likewise, a bystander or witness should also contact an adult.
- If a second incident were to occur, the victim should contact the same adult as contacted previously.
- In the unfortunate event of a third incident, the victim should report the bullying to the Head of School and have a parent or guardian complete the "Bullying Reporting Form" (a copy is attached to this policy and is available at the front office). The Head of School will investigate the incident once a complaint form has been submitted. Appropriate action will be taken against the bully including a "Cease and Desist Order." Additionally, the Head of School will contact the parents of the "bully" to inform of the complaint being issued and the consequences for the actions. The victim will not need to prove that he/she was bullied; the bully will be expected to prove to the Head of School that he/she did not violate the policy. Be advised that false or misleading accusations against

another student will result in consequences for the student who makes a false report.

- If a student defies the “Cease and Desist Order” and continues the bullying behavior, he/she may be suspended from school.

Nothing in this policy requires the affected student to possess a characteristic that is a perceived basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or other distinguishing characteristic.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendo's, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the education environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may still be prohibited by other CMCCS policies or building, classroom, or rules.

Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitutes violations of this policy

**Staff who become involved in bullying will be subject to the following:**

If, after an investigation, a Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School employee is found to have violated this policy, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment. The employee handbook addresses this matter in detail.

ADOPTED: 8.1.23