



## **Anti - Bullying Policy**

Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School promotes a safe and civil environment for students to learn, attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. At Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School, 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. CMCCS is committed to protecting its students, employees, and applicants for admission from bullying, harassment, or discrimination for any reason and of any type. DASA specifically ensures this for New York State public school students. Bullying, harassment, violence, or discrimination will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action.

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 students.

### **Definition of Bullying and Harassment**

Bullying is prohibited and is grounds for suspension or expulsion. Bullying is defined (according to AB 1156) to include severe or pervasive conduct, including cyberbullying, that can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a reasonable student in fear of harm to the student’s person or property;
- Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance; or
- Causing a substantial detrimental effect on a reasonable student’s physical or mental health.

### **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

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic communication technology such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, e-mail, web applications, and text messages. In some cases, cyberbullying is a single child sending a hurtful text to another child. But it can also be a group of students posting hurtful things about another student on a social media website.

Cyberbullying includes but is not limited to:

- Sending mean emails, texts or instant messages to students;
- Threatening or intimidating another student online or in a text message;
- Posting hurtful statements about a student on social media platforms;
- Pretending to be another person by creating a fake online profile;
- Taking an embarrassing or sexually explicit photo of a student and/or sharing it without permission; and
- Sending repetitive neutral messages to someone a student in a harassing manner.

As cyberbullying can also take place at home, parents play an important role in preventing cyberbullying. The following are some strategies that can be helpful in cyberbullying prevention:

- Provide guidance to children on appropriate behavior using technology, which may include:
  - Never give out personal information online, whether on blogs, messaging services, social media sites, or personal websites.
  - Never tell anyone but your parents your password, even friends.
  - If someone sends a mean or threatening message, don't respond. Save it or print it out and show it to an adult.
  - Don't put anything online that you wouldn't want your classmates to see, even in email.
  - Don't send messages or make posts when you're angry. Before clicking "send," ask yourself how you would feel if you received the message.



- Help other students who are bullied online by not joining in and showing bullying messages to an adult.
- Know the sites your children visit and their online activities. Ask where they're going, what they're doing, and who they're doing it with.
- Learn about the sites and applications your children use, so you can better monitor their use.
- Discuss cyberbullying with your children and ask if they have ever experienced it or seen it happen to someone.
- Ask for their passwords, and if necessary tell them you'll only use them in case of emergency.
- Ask to "friend" or "follow" your kids on social media sites or ask another trusted adult to do so.
- Tell your children that you won't blame them if they are cyberbullied. Emphasize that you won't take away their computer/phone privileges - this is one of the main reasons students don't tell adults when they are cyberbullied.

### **Reporting instances of Bullying:**

- A student who is bullied by another student should contact the Dignity Act Coordinator (DASA) or any adult (parent, teacher, or staff member). Likewise, a bystander or witness should also contact an adult.
- All students who are involved in the incident (target, aggressor, and witnesses) will be interviewed.
- After investigating an incident, the Dignity Act Coordinator or school leader must make a determination as to whether the incident is "material." A material incident under DASA is:
  - An act or series of acts by a student and/or employee on school property, or at a school function
  - Creates a hostile environment by conduct – with or without physical contact, and/or – verbal threats, intimidation or abuse
  - Conduct of such a severe or pervasive nature that it has the following effect: – unreasonably and substantially interferes with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits; or – mental, emotional and/or physical well-being; or – reasonably causes, or would reasonably be expected to cause, a student to fear for his or her physical safety
- Plan for change- Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School will utilize restorative practices and provide support to students and persons involved which may include counseling, behavioral interventions, mediation, and/or conflict resolution.



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Measures may include placing students in separate classes or transferring a student to a class taught by a different teacher. Interim measures will be implemented in a manner that minimizes the burden on the individual who was the target of bullying or intimidation.

**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.