

F. Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is prohibited by State law and will not be tolerated at the University of Chicago Charter Schools. Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School District or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

The Anti-Bullying policy is consistent with the policies of the UChicago Charter School, the school board, and any other school policies. This policy is not 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 I of the Illinois Constitution.

1. DEFINITIONS

"Bullying" includes "cyberbullying" and means 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 varying 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.

“Cyberbullying” 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, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications.

Cyberbullying 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. Cyberbullying 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. This definition includes cyberbullying by means of technology that is not owned, leased, or used by the School when a director or teacher received a report that bullying through this means has occurred.

“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, (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, and the School, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' needs in order to keep students in school.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL STAFF

School administrators, teachers and staff who are become aware of school bullying or school violence or who possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying is responsible to:

- Intervene immediately in a manner that is appropriate to the context and ensures the safety of all people involved;
- report the incident of bullying or retaliation to the Campus Director as soon as practicable;
- cooperate fully in any investigation of the incident and in implementing any safety plan established by the Campus Director.

3. REPORTING OF BULLYING BY STUDENTS, PARENTS AND GUARDIANS, AND OTHERS

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to Tanika Island Childress, Chief Executive Office who can be reached by telephone at **(773) 834-0961** and by email at **tanikai@uchicago.edu**. Oral or written reports can also be made to the Campus Director or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to a Campus Director or any staff member. Anonymous reports will also be accepted.

4. NO REPRISAL OR RETALIATION

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

5. RESPONDING TO AND INVESTIGATING REPORTS OF BULLYING

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the CEO, applicable Campus Director, or designee shall promptly inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of every student involved in an alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

Reports of bullying will be promptly investigated and addressed by the CEO, applicable Campus Director or designee. The Campus Director(s) or designee(s) of the involved student(s) shall be notified of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.

All reasonable efforts will be made to complete the investigation within ten (10) school days after the date the report of the incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying. The investigation shall include:

- Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate in the Investigation process.
- Identifying the perpetrator(s), target(s) and bystander(s), as well as any adult who witnessed the incident or may have reliable information about it.
- Conducting an individual interview in a private setting with the alleged perpetrator and target. The alleged perpetrator and target will not be interviewed together or in public. Individual interviews of students and adult bystanders shall also be conducted in private.

- Determining how often the conduct occurred, any past incident or continuing pattern of behavior, and whether the target's education was affected.
- Assessing the individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety, and assigning school staff to create and implement a safety plan that will restore a sense of safety for the target and other students who have been impacted.
- When appropriate, preparing a report of misconduct identifying recommendations for individual consequences pursuant to the Student Conduct Policy.
- Comprehensively documenting the details of the investigation.

A written investigation report shall be prepared and information shared with involved students and their parent(s)/guardians] as appropriate and only if consistent with federal and State laws and rules applicable to student privacy rights.

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules applicable to student privacy rights, parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation shall be provided with information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Campus Director or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

6. KNOWINGLY MAKING FALSE REPORTS OF BULLYING

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the School's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

7. IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS

The School should respond to bullying in a manner tailored to the individual incident, considering the nature of the conduct, the developmental ages of the students involved, and any relevant information related to the involved students' conduct or performance.

Interventions should be taken to address bullying including school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services. When an investigation determines that bullying has occurred, the Campus Director or designee has discretion to impose discipline for the misconduct of the perpetrator in accordance with the Student Conduct Policy.

8. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training and professional development will be conducted to support the School's administrators, teachers and staff in addressing bullying at the School.

9. POSTING OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be posted on the School's website and shall be included in the student handbook. It shall also be posted and maintained where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are posted at the School and its campuses. This policy shall be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, school personnel, including new employees when hired.

This Policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians. The Board or its designee will re-evaluate this Policy every two (2) years based on an assessment of its outcomes and effectiveness, including, but not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff and family observations of safety at school; identification of areas of a school where bullying or bias-based behaviors occur; the types of bullying or bias-based behaviors utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. The information developed will be used to evaluate this policy, and made available on the UChicago Charter School website. The Illinois State Board of Education reviewed this policy on June 15, 2023. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the UChicago Charter School is consistent with the right to exercise free expression and 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 I of the Illinois Constitution.