

Middleborough Public Schools



Image obtained from: <http://heroworkshop.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/bully7.jpg>



Image obtained from: <http://blogs.saschina.org/rene01pd2017/files/2009/12/cyberbully2.jpg>

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

ALL STAFF RECEIVE WRITTEN ANNUAL NOTICE OF THIS PLAN.

Middleborough Public Schools

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

SCOPE OF PLAN

The Middleborough Public School District is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. Towards that end, the Middleborough Public Schools absolutely prohibits bullying and cyber-bullying:

- On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by Middleborough Public Schools, and
- At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by Middleborough Public Schools, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

The Middleborough Public Schools absolutely prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation as defined above. Violation of this policy is a serious offense. Students who engage in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action and remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the conduct and prevent its recurrence. Disciplinary action taken must balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following: verbal warnings, written warnings, reprimands, detentions, short-term or long-term suspensions, or expulsions from school as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements. Nothing in this policy is designed or intended to limit the authority of school administrators and/or the school committee (a) from taking disciplinary or other action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying or cyber-bullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment or (b) from taking disciplinary or other action under General Laws Chapter 71, §§ 37H or 37H1/2, other applicable laws, or local school handbook provisions or district policies, regardless of whether this policy covers the conduct.

The Middleborough Public Schools' response to bullying actions will include, when appropriate, referral to a law enforcement agency. The Middleborough Public Schools will support this plan in all aspects of its activities, including its curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities and parental involvement.

The Middleborough Public Schools Bullying Plan applies to all sites and activities under the supervision and control of the Middleborough Public Schools, or where it has jurisdiction under the law. Nothing in this plan is designed or intended to limit the District's authority to discipline or take remedial action under General Laws Chapter 71, §37H, or in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this plan covers the conduct.

The Middleborough Public Schools prohibits all forms of harassment, discrimination and hate crimes based on race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. Please see the Middleborough Public Schools Harassment Plan and Sexual Harassment Plan.

This plan has been made available for public comment through presentations at School Committee meetings in October, November and December 2010. The draft plan has been available for public comment on the Middleborough Public Schools website throughout the fall of 2010. Additional public comment sessions for families were held on November 1 and November 10, 2010. The plan has been developed and reviewed by the Middleborough Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Task Force which consists of administrators, teachers, parents, and community members.

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I. LEADERSHIP

Each school will conduct a needs assessment in the alternate years of the plan to prepare for revision. The principal of each building is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

The principal of each school is responsible for:

- 1) Receiving reports of alleged bullying and investigating
- 2) Collecting and analyzing reports
- 3) Developing a process for tracking aggressors and targets
- 4) Providing supports for the needs of targets and aggressors
- 5) Including student-specific language regarding the bullying plan in student and staff handbooks
- 6) Facilitating professional development in bullying prevention and intervention
- 7) Guiding parents in supporting anti-violence curriculum at home
- 8) Overseeing of each of the remaining responsibilities within their school
- 9) Submitting bullying logs to the office of the Superintendent

The Superintendent or his/her designee is responsible for reviewing bullying logs submitted to central office.

The Assistant Superintendent is responsible for:

- 1) Planning for ongoing professional development in bullying prevention and intervention
- 2) Reviewing and updating curricula
- 3) Revising policies and protocols, including Internet Safety Policies
- 4) Facilitating meetings of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Task Force

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Task Force is responsible for:

- 1) Planning for and implementing parent engagement and information sessions
- 2) Reviewing and updating the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Middleborough Public Schools thanks the members of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Task Force for their work over the past 6 months in developing this plan, organizing professional development and building parent/community connections. The Task Force includes: Michael Malone, Superintendent; Theresa Craig, Assistant Superintendent; Sara Cederholm, School Committee vice-chairman; Diana Myers-Pachla, Middleborough High School principal; Lisa Machnik, Middleborough High School assistant principal; Paul Branagan, Middleborough High School assistant principal; Lynda Feeney, John T. Nichols, Jr. Middle School Headmaster; Cynthia Grammer, John T. Nichols, Jr. Middle School assistant housemaster; Louise Snyder, Henry B. Burkland School principal; Anita Rodriguez, Mary K. Goode School principal; Virginia Levesque, Memorial Early Childhood Center principal; Sharon Ellis, Parent-Teacher Association president; Amanda Decker, Middleboro Youth Advocates coalition coordinator; Tanya Sullivan, Middleborough High School adjustment counselor; Lisa Grimes, parent; Catherine Braga, Mary K. Goode Educational Support Person; James O'Brien, Henry B. Burkland School Grade 5 teacher; Kathy Dyer, John T. Nichols, Jr. Middle School Special Education teacher; Lisa McDonald, Henry B. Burkland School psychologist; Patricia Tanes, parent; Sergeant Robert Ferreira, Middleborough Police Department.

II. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development was presented to school staff during the fall of 2010 encompassing the requirements of the new law, the regulations established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and an overview of the elements of bullying behavior, gateway behaviors and cyberbullying as follows:

- Teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, nurses – September 23, 2010 – early release day presentation
- Administrators – October 21, 2010 – presentation by Attorney Virginia Tate
- Mini-bus drivers – October 8, 2010
- First Student bus drivers – October 16, 2010
- Substitutes – August 25, 2010
- Coaches, substitutes and all staff session make-up – October 5, 2010
- Cafeteria workers – December 17, 2010

In addition, teachers and administrators have attended presentations by the Massachusetts Reduction Center, the Curriculum Leadership Center at Bridgewater State University and the offices of Stoneman, Chandler and Miller, LLP. Each school sent a staff representative to the MARC Train the Trainer certification session on November 1, 2010.

There will be ongoing professional development to build the skills of all members of school staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, and paraprofessionals, to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The plan for ongoing professional development includes:

- 1) Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents – Spring 2011, Fall 2011
- 2) Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents – Spring 2011, Fall 2011
- 3) Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among the aggressor, the target, and any witnesses to the bullying – *as information becomes available* Winter/Spring 2012
- 4) Research findings on bullying – Spring 2011, Fall 2011
- 5) Information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying – Fall 2011, ongoing
- 6) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying – Spring 2011, Fall 2011

Professional development will address the requirements pertaining to IEP considerations for students whose disability puts them at risk for being aggressors or targets as guidance becomes available from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be included in employee handbooks and distributed at the start of each school year.

III. RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The principal in each building will maintain resources and current tools for intervening and preventing bullying. These tools may include but are not limited to: behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula as determined by individual circumstances. The strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets, and family members of those students will be specific to each school and may include the use of adjustment counselors, guidance counselors, school psychologists, teachers, special educators or other school or community resources.

As required by 603 CMR 49.00: M.G.L. 71, §37O, as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

Each school principal works with staff and families to continually build positive school environments. The following is a sampling of the programs in place at each of the schools.

Memorial Early Childhood Center

Classroom incentives and rewards for positive behavior

Mary K. Goode Elementary School

Fine Dining

Smile-O-Grams

Student Behavior Recognition Award

Student of the Month

Henry B. Burkland Elementary School

Rockin' Role Models

Classroom incentives for positive behavior

John T. Nichols, Jr. Middle School

Tiger Stripes

Tiger Trails

Guest speakers and presentations to promote a positive school environment

SAY YES Committee

Builders Club

Red Ribbon Week

Middleboro Youth Advocates

Middleborough High School

Freshmen Mentoring

RSVP: Raising Student Voices Program

Special Olympics Pep Rally

Sachem Buddies Program

GLSEN: Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network

Red Ribbon Week

One book summer reading program – “Little People” by Dan Kennedy

Guest speakers and presentations to promote a positive school environment

Middleboro Youth Advocates

Best practices across the schools:

Building-Based Support Teams (BBST)

Curriculum Accommodation Plans (CAP)

Child Study Teams (CST)

Counseling Services

English Language Learners (ELL) supports and services

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Section 504 Accommodation Plans

Special Education Individualized Education Programs

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Grade-span specific curricula to prevent bullying will be noted in the handbook for each school annually. The violence prevention curricula currently identified for implementation at each school are:

- Grades PreK – 2 - Second Step
- Grades 3 – 8 – Steps to Respect
- Grade 9 – 12 - MARC curriculum pilot starting in the spring of 2011.

Bullying prevention curricula is informed by current research emphasizing any number of the following approaches:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when witness to other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying , including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

The student-related sections of this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan are also reviewed with students at the start of each school year.

V. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Parents and guardians will receive information about the bullying prevention curriculum of Middleborough Public Schools, how they can reinforce that curriculum at home, how they can support the district or school prevention and intervention plan, the dynamics of bullying, and online safety and cyberbullying through student handbooks and scheduled information sessions. Information on the bullying plan and information sessions for families will be conveyed to parent through communication by any number of the following: flyers on parent presentation and trainings, School Newsletters, Open House, Parent-Teacher Conferences, PTA, PTSA, School Council Meetings, School Committee Presentations, Parent Coffees, District and School Web Pages.

Parent Sessions to introduce the law and to solicit public comment on the proposed Middleborough Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan were offered on November 1, 2010 at 6:30 P.M. and November 10, 2010 at 10:30 A.M. Parents were informed through flyers in Tuesday folders in grades K-8. There was a direct mailing for families of high school students. Notification was also posted on the website, announced at PTA/PTSA and included school newsletters.

Sessions scheduled in the spring of 2010 will target Internet safety, cyberbullying and school-specific curriculum to prevent bullying. The district will provide annual written notice of the relevant student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms. The student handbooks will include an age-appropriate summary of the student-related sections of the Plan. An addendum to the handbooks for each school was distributed to all families on October 26, 2010.

Middleborough Public Schools will work with families to prevent bullying. Upon investigation and determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal will promptly notify the parents of the target and the aggressor of the determination and the school district or school's procedures for responding to the bullying or retaliation. The principal will inform the target's parent of actions that school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. A principal's notification to a parent about an incident or a report of bullying or retaliation must comply with confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations, 34 CFR Part 99, as set forth in 603 CMR 49.07

VI. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

The District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying and cyberbullying in our schools or school-related activities. The District will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying and cyberbullying and take prompt, effective action to end that behavior and prevent its

reoccurrence. Action will include, where appropriate, referral to a law enforcement agency. The District will support this commitment in all aspects of its activities, including its curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parental involvement.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying are prohibited:

- On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

Students who engage in bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, however, disciplinary action taken must balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following: verbal warnings, written warnings, reprimands, detentions, short-term or long-term suspensions, or expulsions from school as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements. Nothing in this plan is designed or intended to limit the District's authority to discipline or take remedial action under General Laws Chapter 71, §37H, or in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this plan covers the conduct.

VII. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Violation of this plan is a serious offense. Violators may be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action to stop the conduct and prevent its reoccurrence. The District is committed to protecting a target and witnesses, from future bullying.

If an incident is determined to be bullying (see VIII. Definitions), the student will be disciplined according to the school handbook. The range of disciplinary actions that may be imposed as a result of bullying may be up to and including, but not limited to one or more of the following: verbal warnings, written warnings, reprimands, detentions, short-term or long-term suspensions, or expulsions from school as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the school administration and/or school committee from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.

If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, commonwealth charter school, or nonpublic school, the district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other district or school so that both may take appropriate action.

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other

individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. No determination of bullying will be made solely on the basis of anonymous report.

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

The principal will refer to the Memorandum of Understanding with local law enforcement and make a determination as to whether or not communication with local law enforcement is appropriate.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

Aggressor means the student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined by Massachusetts General Law c. 71, §37O, means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- (a) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- (b) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or damage to his or her property;
- (c) creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- (d) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- (e) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include cyberbullying.

Bystander means others who are within the visual and/or verbal range of an act of bullying. They can encourage or discourage bullying.

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, 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, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include:

- (a) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- (b) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated above in (a) through (e) of the definition of bullying; or
- (c) 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 conditions enumerated above in (a) through (e) of the definition of bullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in MGL, 71, 37O is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

School grounds means property on which a school building or facility is located; or property that is owned, leased or used by a school district, commonwealth charter school or non-public school for any school-sponsored activities, functions, programs, instruction or training.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

IX. REPORTING BULLYING INCIDENTS

All viable reports of bullying will be investigated.

Staff, students and parents/guardians will report incidents of suspected bullying by any one of the following methods:

- Completing an Incident Report Form and submitting it to the principal. The form is available:
 - in school offices
 - from classroom teachers
 - through the district website
- Submitting a report by email through the “REPORT BULLYING” link on the Middleborough Public Schools homepage at www.middleboro.k12.ma.us.
- Contacting the principal or designee by phone.
- Submitting a report by mail to each principal. Addresses are available in Appendix 1.

Completion of the Incident Report Form is not required in order to report bullying. Families and students may meet with a staff member for assistance in completing the form.

Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously through any of the above methods. Anonymous phone calls or messages will be directed to the building principal or designee.

Reporting by Staff: A member of school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation s/he has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or designee.

Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others: The district expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the school principal or designee. An individual may make an anonymous report of bullying or retaliation, however, no disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Reporting to Parents/Guardians: Upon investigation and determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the target and the aggressor of the determination and the school district or school's procedures for responding to the bullying or retaliation. The principal or designee shall inform the target's parent of actions that school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. Nothing in this provision prohibits the principal or designee from contacting a parent of a target or aggressor about a report of bullying or retaliation prior to a determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred. If the alleged target and alleged aggressor attend different schools, the principal receiving the report shall inform the principal of the other student's school, who shall be responsible for implementing this reporting requirement for the student attending his school.

Reporting to Local Law Enforcement: At any point after receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the school principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the school principal or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. In addition, if an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a school, the principal of the school informed of the bullying or retaliation or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency if s/he has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. The principal shall document the reasons for his or her decision to notify law enforcement.

Reporting to Administrator of Another School District or School: If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school and the Middleborough Public School District is the first to be informed of the bullying or retaliation, then the Superintendent of the Middleborough Public Schools or designee must, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.

X. INVESTIGATING REPORTED BULLYING INCIDENTS

The investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint, gathering information from the target or witness, including such matters as: what specifically happened, who committed the alleged acts, who was present or may have information about the events, when the events occurred (date, time of day), and where the events occurred.

If age appropriate, the target or witness may be asked to put the complaint in writing and to sign and date it. If the target or witness cannot, or chooses not to, write a complaint, the investigator will record the allegations, read them to the target/witness to confirm accuracy, and ask him or her to sign the document. If the target/witness cannot, or chooses not to, sign, the investigator may sign and date the document her/himself. The investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint, gathering information from the target or witness, including such matters as: what specifically happened, who committed the alleged acts, who was present or may have information about the events, when the events occurred (date, time of day), and where the events occurred.

Interviews: Once the allegations are established, the investigator will gather other evidence, which often involves interviews of the alleged aggressor and/or other witnesses. If appropriate, the investigator should remind the alleged aggressor and witnesses that retaliation against persons whom they believe might have reported the incidents or cooperated with the investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Confidentiality: The confidentiality of the person who reports bullying or retaliation and/or provides information during an investigation of bullying or retaliation will be maintained to the extent practicable, consistent with the school's legal obligations.

XI. DETERMINATION OF BULLYING

School personnel must weigh all of the evidence objectively to determine whether the alleged events occurred and, if they did, whether the events constitute bullying or retaliation. The determination must be based upon all of the facts and circumstances and the perspective of a reasonable person. When applied to children, the "reasonable person" standard is generally "that of a reasonable person of like age, intelligence, and experience under like circumstances." See *Ellison v. Brady*, 924 F.2d 872 (9th Cir. 1991).

Upon investigation and determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal shall promptly notify the parents of the target and the aggressor of the determination and the school district or school's procedures for responding to the bullying or retaliation. The principal shall inform the target's parent of actions

that school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. Because of the legal requirements regarding confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

If bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the school will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or benefiting from school activities. As with the investigation, the response will be individually tailored to all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the ages of the students involved. Students who engage in bullying or retaliation will be disciplined. In addition to taking disciplinary action, the following are examples of steps that may be taken to prevent the recurrence of bullying or retaliation:

- Conferencing with parents of target and aggressor;
- Transferring an aggressor's classroom or school (or the target's if requested by target or parents);
- Limiting or denying an aggressor access to an area of a school;
- Enhancing adult supervision on school premises;
- Excluding an aggressor from participation in school-sponsored or school-related functions, after-school programs, and/or extracurricular activities;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students;
- Developing a Personalized Action Plan and directives for future conduct, including providing the target with a process for reporting any concerns about future conduct immediately. *It is critical to involve the student in creating an action plan that involves a reporting process that works for that particular student.*
- Providing counseling (or other appropriate services) or referral to such services for the target and/or the aggressor and/or for appropriate family members of said students as necessary.

If appropriate, within a reasonable time period following the determination that bullying or retaliation occurred, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been any recurrence of the prohibited conduct. If there has been a recurrence, the principal or designee will determine the appropriate next steps.

Each school will retain a report of the complaint, containing the name of the target, the name of the aggressor, the date of the complaint, investigator, school, a brief statement of the nature of the complaint, the outcome of the investigation, and the action taken.

Procedures for Reporting

***This process only applies to situations where bullying is alleged. Harassment incidents must be reported in accordance with Middleborough Public Schools Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy. Other incidents will be reported using the school disciplinary action process.

Overarching steps for staff:

- 1. Intervene as soon as possible.**
- 2. Support the target.**
- 3. Report incident in writing.**

A **staff member** who witnesses or receives a report of an incident of aggression will:

- 1) Use professional judgment to intervene as soon as possible to stop the behavior and determine if there are immediate safety issues. (Note child's level of distress and/or the presence of injuries, damaged/torn clothes, etc.) If immediate safety issues exist, take child to nurse and/or report incident to principal/designee immediately.
- 2) If the staff member suspects that there may be potential bullying, he/she will assist the reporter or target to complete the **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM** and give it to a building principal or designee. All staff will have copies of the Incident Report Form readily available. If the reporter, target or witness, is unwilling or unable to complete the form, the receiving staff member will complete the form with as much information as could be attained from the child.
- 3) Report all suspected bullying incidents even if you are unsure if the child wants the incident reported.

If a **child or parent/guardian** reports an incident of aggression to a staff member as potential bullying, the staff member will:

- 1) Determine if there are immediate safety issues that must be addressed right away. (Note child's level of distress and/or the presence of injuries, damaged/torn clothes, etc.) If immediate safety issues exist, take child to nurse and/or report incident to principal/designee immediately.
- 2) *Report all incidents of aggression to administration.* If the incident is suspected to be bullying, encourage child to complete the **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM** (subject to age and ability). If the reporter, target or witness, is unwilling or unable to complete the form, the receiving staff member will complete the form with as much information as could be attained from the child.
- 3) Give the completed Incident Reporting Form to the principal or designee.

Bullying reports can be submitted **anonymously** provided that no disciplinary action shall be taken against the student solely on the basis of any anonymous report.

- Incident Reporting Forms are available in each school office and on the homepage of the Middleborough Public Schools website at www.middleboro.k12.ma.us under the heading **Community; Select Report Bullying.**
- Anonymous reports can be left as a voice message for the principal in each building. If reporting bullying anonymously by any method, please provide information on the following: Who was the target? Who was the aggressor? Where did it happen? When did it happen (date and time)? What happened?

Please note: False reports of bullying will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action for anyone deliberately providing false information.

School heading inserted here

Middleborough Public Schools

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1) Name of Reporter/Person filing the Report:

Date of Report:

2) Check whether you are the: Target of the behavior

Reporter (not the target)

3) Check whether you are a: Student

Staff member

Parent

Administrator

Other (please specify):

4) Your contact information/telephone number (if not a staff member):

5) Information about the incident:

-First and last name of Target: _____ Grade: _____

-First and last name of Aggressor (person who engaged in the behavior): _____ Grade: _____

-Date(s) of incident(s): _____

-Time when incident(s) occurred: _____

-Location of incident(s) {Be as specific as possible}: _____

6) Witnesses (List all people who saw the incident or have information about it:

Name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade, if a student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
Name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade, if a student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
Name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade, if a student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

7) Describe the details of the incident (Include names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said. Include specific words used). *Please use additional space on back if necessary.*

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

<p>For Administrative Use:</p> <p>_____ Investigate as potential bullying incident (Proceed to page 15 of Plan) OR</p> <p>_____ Other infraction:</p> <p>_____ Action taken by staff member:</p> <p>_____ Action taken by administration, if applicable:</p>
--

PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING

The principal or designee will promptly investigate all viable reports of bullying or retaliation.

- 1) Interview **target** of aggression.
 - Interview the target rather than the aggressor first. This addresses the urgency of the targeted child's need to talk to someone and allows the investigator to assess if immediate danger or safety issues exist and must be dealt with right away.
 - Encourage the child to provide a written description of the incident (subject to age and ability).
 - Do not ask to see the target in the alleged aggressor's presence. It is important to stress that mediation should not be used with bullying situations, i.e. conflicts characterized by an inequality of power where one child is being clearly victimized by another. Mediation is the ideal response to equal-power conflicts between children.
 - Remind the target that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
 - Consider whether or not a 51A should be filed.
 - If at any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, the principal has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued, the principal will notify the Middleborough Police Department in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding.
 - If an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the Middleborough Police Department if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.
 - If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603CMR 49.00.
 - Support the target (additional guidance on this will be developed for each grade span).
- 2) Interview any witnesses, including staff, students, parents or guardians and others as necessary.
 - Remind the witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
 - Encourage the witnesses to provide a written description of the incident (subject to age and ability).
- 3) Interview alleged **aggressor**.
 - Remind the alleged aggressor that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. This includes retaliation against the reporter, target or any witnesses.
 - Encourage the alleged aggressor to provide a written description of the incident (subject to age and ability).

ACTION STEPS UPON DETERMINATION OF BULLYING

- *A principal or designee may opt to contact a parent of a target or aggressor about a report of bullying or retaliation prior to a determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred.*
- Develop a safety plan for the target if needed.
- Develop a Personalize Action Plan to prevent a recurrence of the behavior. This may include counseling or access to other school resources.

- Share action steps taken with:
 - Target and parent/guardian* in keeping with state and federal law (maintaining confidentiality)
 - Appropriate staff member(s)*/student(s)* who reported the incident (maintaining confidentiality)
 - Support staff* (e.g., lunchroom and playground staff), as needed and
 - Teachers* or administrators who have contact with the target or aggressor, as needed.
- Monitor safety of target and increase supervision of aggressor as needed.
- Document the report, the investigation, the action steps taken and any disciplinary action on the Incident Reporting Form and additional pages as needed.
- Contact parents of both target and aggressor promptly if the incident is determined to be bullying.
- Enter incident information on school log.
- Schedule a follow up with the target.
- Notify the superintendent or designee of determinations of bullying.

*Note: Sharing the outcome of this incident is critical for maintaining a school climate where adults and children feel able to report such behaviors. Student-specific information regarding discipline or other actions taken cannot be shared with families or school personnel who do not have a need to know for educational purposes. However, families may be informed of safety plans and preventative action steps and should be referred to this plan and the student handbook as guides for outcomes of investigations.

II. INVESTIGATION

1. Investigator(s): _____ **Position(s):** _____

1. Interviews:

Interviewed target **Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

(Student statements should be written on separate paper and attached).

Summary of interview:

Interviewed aggressor **Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

(Student statements should be written on separate paper and attached).

Summary of interview:

Interviewed witnesses **Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

(Student statements should be written on separate paper and attached).

Summary of interview:

3. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor? **Yes** **No**

If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously? **Yes** **No**

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION **Yes** **No**

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

II. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:

YES

Bullying

Retaliation

NO

Incident documented as _____

Action taken _____

2. Contacts:

Target's parent/guardian Date: _____

Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____

Law Enforcement, if warranted, after notifying the Superintendent Date: _____

3. Action Taken (specify whether action was taken for aggressor or target or both):

Counseling, or referral for counseling: _____

Education:

Change to school environment:

Safety plan:

Loss of Privileges:

Discipline according to handbook (specify): _____

Other _____

4. Describe Safety Planning: _____

Follow-up with Target: scheduled for _____

Initial and date when completed: _____

Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for _____

Initial and date when completed: _____

5. Letter sent to parent/guardian of target documenting actions taken – Date: _____

6. Notification to special education team facilitator if the target or aggressor has an IEP: _____

Date report is forwarded to Principal (if the principal was not the investigator): _____

Date report is entered into School Bullying Log: _____

Log to be forwarded to the superintendent each month.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX A
Addresses to Report Bullying
Replace [at] with @ in email address

Michael F. Malone

Superintendent
30 Forest St.
Middleborough, MA 02346

Voice: 508-946-2000
Email: mmalone[at]middleboro.k12.ma.us

Theresa Craig

Assistant Superintendent
30 Forest St.
Middleborough, MA 02346

Voice: 508-946-2000 x2114
Email: tcraig[at]middleboro.k12.ma.us

Diana Myers-Pachla

Principal, Middleborough High School
71 East Grove St.
Middleborough, MA 02346

Voice: 508-946-2010
Email: dmyers-pachla[at]middleboro.k12.ma.us

Lynda J. Feeney

Headmaster, Nichols Middle School
112 Tiger Drive
Middleborough, MA 02346

Voice: 508-946-2020
Email: lfeeney[at]middleboro.k12.ma.us

Louise Snyder

Principal, Burkland Elementary School
41 Mayflower Ave.
Middleborough, MA 02346

Voice: 508-946-2040
Email: lsnyder[at]middleboro.k12.ma.us

Anita Rodriguez

Principal, Mary K. Goode Elementary School
31 Mayflower Ave.
Middleborough, MA 02346

Voice: 508-946-2045
Email: rodregui[at]middleboro.k12.ma.us

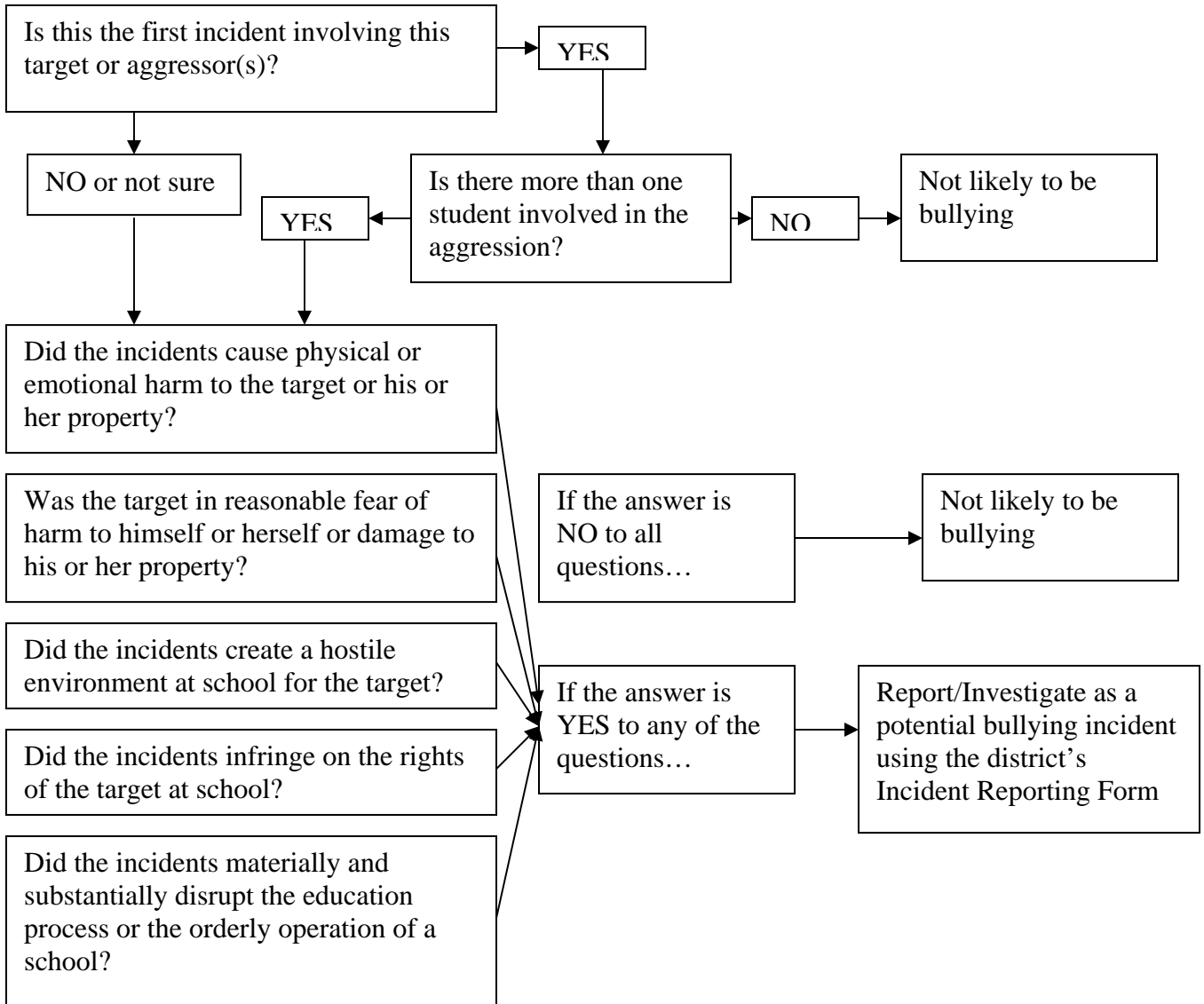
Virginia Levesque

Principal, Memorial Early Childhood Center
219 North Main St.
Middleborough, MA 02346

Voice: 508-946-2032
Email: vlevesque[at]middleboro.k12.ma.us

Appendix B

FLOW CHART FOR IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL BULLYING (INCLUDES CYBERBULLYING)



Appendix C Resources to Prevent Bullying

- Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) at Bridgewater State University.
<http://webhost.bridgew.edu/marc/index.html>
- Stop Bullying Now, practical research-based strategies to reduce bullying in schools.
<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/>
- Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw10/sl100092.html>
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations (FERPA)
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html>
- Second Step and Steps to Respect Curriculum, <http://www.cfchildren.org/programs/ssp/overview/>
- Massachusetts Department of Education, Bullying Prevention and Intervention,
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/bullying>