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## **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

**Approved March 2023**

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## I. Overview

The Hancock Central School is committed to providing a safe, positive and rigorous educational setting that fosters a student-centered learning environment based on mutual respect. To prepare our students for an ever-changing world, we believe education is the shared responsibility of the student, home, school, and community.

## II. Definitions

*Aggressor* is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

*Bullying*, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

*Cyberbullying*, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cellphones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

*Hostile environment*, as defined in M.G.L. c. 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 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, and paraprofessionals.

*Target* is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### III. **Leadership**

Leadership at all levels will play a critical role in developing and implementing Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans (BPIP) in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. Leadership is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. It is also the responsibility of leaders to involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing and implementing the BPIP.

The Hancock principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the BPIP within the school. The BPIP includes steps to be taken by the principal or designee to follow up on receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, staff responsibilities, and nature of training staff and students.

The Hancock principal is responsible for the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all school stakeholders, which include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The BPIP shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially. The principal will review the proposed plan and seek feedback from the Hancock Organization of Parents and Educators (HOPE) and the Hancock School Committee. A copy of the plan will be included in a weekly family email allowing for a public comment period. In addition, it will be shared with the school's state police liaison. Comments, feedback, and suggestions will be considered and revision made prior to submission to the School Committee for approval.

#### A. Assessing Needs and Resources

At least every two years, including the 2022-2023 school year, the principal will administer a student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our school. A similar survey will be used with faculty, staff, and parents/guardians to assist in determining school climate needs and identifying vulnerable populations and areas in the school building, on school grounds, or on school buses. Additionally, the school and district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department.

This process will help the District to identify patterns of behavior, areas of concern, and will inform decision making for prevention strategies. These strategies may include adult supervision, professional development, curricula, and in-school supports and services.

#### B. Planning and Oversight

Anyone, including a parent, guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor **solely** on the basis of an anonymous report. Anonymous reports may limit further investigation if the parties involved cannot be identified.

Students who have been, or parents of students who have been bullied, or who observe incidents of bullying are encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

The Hancock school will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Report Form, voicemail (413-738-5676), a dedicated mailing address (3080 Hancock Road, Hancock, MA 01237), and an email address ([jmerselis@hancockschool.org](mailto:jmerselis@hancockschool.org)).

Staff must immediately report bullying and/or peer harassment to the building principal if they either witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation in another manner. Staff members responsible for reporting acts of bullying include, but are not limited, to the following: educators, administrators,

counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals.

Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an incident of bullying and/or peer harassment are prohibited. Any student who is determined to have falsely accused another of bullying and/or peer harassment shall be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with school policies.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

The building principal is responsible for the collection, analysis, and tracking of all data on bullying and/or harassment. This includes, but is not limited to, collection of information related to targets and aggressors, family communication, and provided resources. The principal will also maintain a system to house and organize information connected to reporting and investigation. Ongoing professional development and identified supports that respond to the needs of targeted students and aggressors, will be coordinated by the principal.

The principal will ensure that all staff members participate in required training and work with the school adjustment counselor to ensure that age appropriate curriculum is utilized and work with parents and families to engage them in the review process. This plan will be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The superintendent of schools will update and revise this policy as required and will ensure handbooks and code of conducts reflect the most recent policy and procedures. Amendments or changes will be distributed to faculty, staff, and students

### C. Investigation Procedures

The principal or his/her designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed. The principal or designee conducting the investigation will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and

witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber bullying Report Form, which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's adjustment counselor and/or the superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, local law enforcement agencies shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen (14) school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum, the principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

The school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and the principal or designee shall maintain a file. A monthly report shall be provided to the superintendent. Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with school disciplinary policies.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian 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. Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's

#### D. Developing Priority Statements

The Hancock School District recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable and at elevated risk of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The District will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The Hancock School District adopted a policy that prohibits harassment and discrimination based on the categories listed above. The District is committed to remediate any discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category.

The District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation and take prompt action

to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The BPIP is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school and district are committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established the BPIP for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the BPIP except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal or the assistant principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the BPIP, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the BPIP, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

#### **IV. Training and Professional Development**

The district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the BPIP by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school or district handbook and the code of conduct. In addition, staff members will be provided information regarding the steps that will be taken relative to a bullying/harassment report and school based curriculum.

Annual training for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students shall be provided in the areas of preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying. All staff members are required to complete the annual training within the first month of school or within a month of hire. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, the content of school-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention incorporated into the curriculum for all Pre-K through sixth grade students;

- Age-appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

Professional development provided by the Hancock School District will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities. During every IEP and 504 meeting, the team must determine if a student is at elevated risk for bullying, harassment, or teasing and if so, must have a plan to support the student to develop skills to recognize and respond to these incidents. Although this requirement is primarily focused on students with autism and students whose disability affects social development, the Hancock School District feels it is important to include all members of the IEP or 504 team in a discussion, no matter the students' identified disability. The team decision is documented on the meeting notes and included in the students IEP or 504.

Other areas included in staff professional development are fostering an understanding of diversity and differences; building relationships and communicating with families; managing classroom behaviors; maintaining a safe and caring classroom environment; supporting students in the development of positive communication skills and empathy for others.

#### **V. Access to Resources and Services**

The Hancock School District employs a half time school adjustment counselor, a full time school nurse, and contracts for school psychology and behavioral support services. The school adjustment counselor has experience as a social worker and has access to many community resources and supports. Due to the nature and structure of the Hancock School District, students have the benefit of looping with classroom teachers for two school years. Classrooms are staffed with a teacher and a paraprofessional. Students have access to many supportive adults in the school community.

Individual and group counseling is provided at the school. Family consultation and collaboration occurs frequently and the school adjustment counselor works closely with families and acts as a partner to help access support from community partners. This includes referrals to counseling and crisis services, information on food pantries, clothing drives, and other community support.

## **VI. Academic and Non-Academic Activities**

The Hancock School District continues to support students in the acquisition of age appropriate skills and knowledge relative to bullying prevention and social skills development. A local priority is focused on connections and community building. This is of particular importance as we transition from pandemic restriction and mitigation strategies to more pre-pandemic structures and approaches to learning. Students were restricted from many activities and experiences that naturally grew their social skills. This included cooperative academic and extracurricular activities, engaging in sharing activities, cross grade/classroom learning opportunities, and working in groups or on teams. Many community building activities that were traditions within the school were canceled due to required mitigation strategies. The teachers, counselors, administrators, and staff recognize the academic and social gaps present as a result of these restrictions.

With the easement of pandemic restrictions, the building principal, school adjustment counselor, and teachers have implemented weekly whole school team building activities, reintroduced a program where sixth grade students work with and read to our preschool students, and have reinstated lunch bunch, cross grade recess, and after school activities. With a focus on community, responsibility, and team building in conjunction with the development of connections and relationships across the school, students are experiencing a safe and supportive school environment that respects diversity and differences.

These activities are directly connected to specific bullying prevention approaches. In addition, identified curriculum utilized is a combination of the Second Step Program and Adventures in Guidance. The overarching focus is based on the following pillars:

- Awareness
- Responsibility
- Patience
- Honesty
- Courage
- Gratitude

- Compassion
- Respect
- Perseverance
- Tolerance
- Appreciation of Others

These pillars are used to address the areas of Self-awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationships Skills, and Responsible Decision Making. These areas of focus are presented in an age appropriate manner and empower students to take action by knowing what to do if they witness students or staff members engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation. Students are presented with information and support on seeking adult assistance, utilizing respectful communication, respecting and appreciating diversity and differences, and understanding the dynamics of bullying.

Cyberbullying and safe and appropriate use of electronic communication and technology is taught to students by the technology teacher. In addition, the sixth grade students participate in a digital citizenship unit and conduct age appropriate presentations to all students on the appropriate use of technology and the dynamic of cyberbullying.

Integrated into the fabric of our school culture, structure, and expectations are approaches that are integral to the establishment of a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of bullying intervention and prevention and include the following:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary students, and homeless students;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely; and

- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

## **VII. Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation**

### **A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation**

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 staff members shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, 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. The Hancock School District offers a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, voicemail box, a dedicated mailing address, and an email address.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The Hancock School District school will:

- 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
- 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, and the school nurse office, and
- 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the Hancock School District will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, and the superintendent or

designee when the principal or the assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the BPIP that is made available to parents or guardians.

### 1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee when the principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report as provided 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.

### 2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal is the alleged aggressor. This may include providing an oral report to the counselor, nurse, trusted adult, or principal.

## B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation

### 1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but

not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. This may include developing a safety plan, connecting the student with a trusted adult or peer, addressing seating arrangements, or increased monitoring.

## 2. Obligations to Notify Others

### a. Notice to parents or guardians.

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

### b. Notice to Another School or District.

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 603 CMR 49.00.

### c. Notice to Law Enforcement.

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, 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 local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the BPIP and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

## C. Investigation

The principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful, and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If consultation with legal counsel is necessary, the principal or designee will inform the superintendent who will follow up with the Hancock School District's attorney.

#### D. Determinations.

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development. The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian 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.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

#### E. Responses to Bullying.

##### 1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills Building

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of

responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d) (v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

## 2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the BPIP and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

### 3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the Hancock principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. Within a reasonable period of time, following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

## **VIII. Collaboration with Families**

### A. Parent education and resources.

The Hancock school principal will offer education programs for parents and guardians focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with HOPE.

The adjustment counselor will work collaboratively with the District Attorney's office to schedule parent and student training and workshops focused on internet safety and social media.

### B. Notification requirements.

Each year the Hancock School District will inform parents and guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The Hancock School District will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the BPIP and the school Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The primary mode of communicating this information will be through the Hancock Handbook. The school or district will post the BPIP and related information on its website.

## IX. **Prohibition against Bullying and Retaliation**

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

1. On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at 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
2. 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 having reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in the BPIP requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

## X. **Problem Resolution System**

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seek assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the superintendent's office.

## XI. **Relationships to Other Laws**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Nothing in the BPIP prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in BPIP is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, M.G.L. c. 71, §§41 and 42, M.G.L.c 76 § 5, or other applicable laws, or local school or district policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the BPIP covers the behavior.

## Hancock Central School

### Bullying Prevention & Intervention Incident Reporting Form

Today's Date:

Name of alleged Target(s):

Grade:

Name of alleged Aggressor(s):

Grade:

Date(s) the incident occurred:

Time of Incident:

Location (be specific):

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

Witnesses (list people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name:  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name:  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name:  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Person Filing this Report :*

Submit this form to the principal. Under law, this form **can** be completed anonymously.

The Hancock School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, age, gender, gender identity, national origin, sexual orientation; disability, homelessness, or veteran status.