

**[Name of School]**  
**Cyberbullying Prevention Policy**

**Introduction**

[Name of school] recognizes that technology plays an important role in everyone's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and risks, and to equip students with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly. The school has a duty to protect its students and provide a safe and healthy environment.

**Purpose**

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- Students, staff, and parents are educated to understand what is cyberbullying and what can be the consequences.
- Knowledge, policies, and procedures are in place to prevent incidents of cyberbullying in school or within the school community.
- We have appropriate measures to effectively deal with cyberbullying incidents.
- We monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures.

**Definition**

Cyberbullying involves the use of communication technologies, such as the internet, social networking sites, online forums, gaming forums and applications (apps), community apps, websites, email, text messaging, and online messaging to repeatedly harass or intimidate someone.

Cyberbullying may include:

- Repeated tormenting online.

- Sending someone insulting emails, texts, or messages.
- Sending someone threatening emails, texts, or messages. Threats could include threats to cause physical harm, harm to property, or harm to a person's family or household.
- Creating a website or blog to embarrass, insult, or threaten someone.
- Creating a fake profile to ruin or harm someone's reputation.
- Impersonating someone with the intent to cause harm.
- Sharing defamatory information.
- Making threats to share someone's personal information, if he or she does not comply with a demand.

## **Policy**

It is the policy of [Name of School] to provide a learning environment that is free from cyberbullying. It is a violation of this policy for any student to engage in cyberbullying, or for any employee of [Name of School] to condone or fail to report acts of cyberbullying that they witness or become aware of (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; (ii) at school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions or programs, whether on or off school grounds; (iii) at school bus stops;(iv) on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased, or used by the school district; or (v) through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the school district.

It also is a violation of this policy for any student to engage in cyberbullying at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district, if the cyberbullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of the school, as determined by school administrators.

[Name of School] will not tolerate retaliation against a person who reports cyberbullying, provides information during an investigation of cyberbullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying or cyberbullying.

Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of cyberbullying should report it immediately to [name and title]. Students, parents, and staff who witness or become aware of cyberbullying should immediately report it to [name and title].

## **Preventing cyberbullying**

### Understanding

- Staff will receive training in identifying cyberbullying and understanding their responsibilities.
- Students will be educated about cyberbullying during bullying prevention [day/week/month] assemblies, projects, etc.
- Students will be educated about keeping personal information private and appropriate use of the internet.
- At the beginning of the school year or at the time a new student begins studies at [Name of School], students will sign a Nassau County Digital Citizen Pledge before they are allowed to use school computer equipment and the internet in school and parents will be encouraged to discuss its contents with their children.
- Parents will be provided with information on e-safety and cyberbullying via email, talks, etc.
- Students, parents, and staff will have access to information on cyberbullying prevention on the [Name of School]'s website.
- The [school principal] will be responsible to effectively publicize the cyberbullying prevention policy and consequences.

### Reporting incidents

- Students should contact [name and title] via [all venues — email, phone, appointment, etc.] when they are concerned about a cyberbullying incident.

- Staff will be responsible to promote the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgement.
- Staff will provide information to students about reassurances of ‘whistleblowing’ and the appropriate way of informing staff or parents about incidents they have witnessed.
- Staff are required to report incidents of cyberbullying promptly to [name and title].
- The principal will ensure the ways in which cyberbullying can be reported are publicized to all members of the school community.
- Administration will ensure staff can recognize signs of cyberbullying with regular training.
- Staff will provide information on external reporting routes, such as [name apps, websites, phone services, etc.]

#### Responding to cyberbullying

- Most cases of cyberbullying will be handled and investigated through the school’s [name and title of person, or name of department].

#### Investigation

- Members of staff, parents, and students should contact [name and title] for the purposes of reporting and possible investigation.
- All cases will be referred to [name and title] and logged by [name and title].
- Reports of cyberbullying will be promptly investigated.
- Staff, students, and parents should be advised to preserve, save, and print evidence, and save phone messages.
- Students may be asked to forward email messages.

#### Working with a student who engaged in cyberbullying

- Consequences will be issued by [name and title of person or group of persons, committee, etc.] as appropriate.
- Corrective action may be determined by the number of previous acts, the nature of the act, the maturity of the parties, and the context in which the alleged act occurred.

- [Name and title], or a designee, shall notify parents or legal guardians of the student accused of cyberbullying.
- [Name and title], or a designee, shall include parents or legal guardians in the remediation of severe or escalating behavior.
- The aim of the corrective action will be:
  - To help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the cyberbullying will not be tolerated.
  - To hold the student responsible, to get him or her to recognize the harm caused, and to deter repeat behavior.
  - To demonstrate to the school community that cyberbullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it, deterring others from behaving similarly.
  - In applying consequences, consideration will be given to the impact of the cyberbullying incidents and whether it was unintentional or in retaliation.
  - The outcome will include helping the student who engaged in cyberbullying to recognize the consequences of their actions and to provide support to enable changes in his or her attitude and behavior.
  - Consequences may range from positive behavioral interventions to suspension or expulsion.
  - Consequences shall include consideration of compliance with state and federal Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act requirements, if appropriate.
  - A key part of the consequences may involve ensuring that the student who engaged in cyberbullying delete files or remove abusive online content.
- The school principal or designee may notify law enforcement of the cyberbullying incidents.

#### Working with alleged victims of cyberbullying

- [Name and title], or a designee, shall notify parents or legal guardians of reports by their children of alleged incidents of cyberbullying.
- [Name and title], or a designee, shall notify students, parents, or legal guardians of support available for victims of cyberbullying, if appropriate.

- Parents or legal guardians of students who alleged incidents of cyberbullying may a request a meeting with [name and title] to discuss action taken and next steps.
- Students who experience cyberbullying by another student at [Name of School] will be assured that the school will take all necessary measures to stop the cyberbullying.

#### Policy effectiveness

- [Name and title] will ensure regular review and update of cyberbullying prevention policies.
- [Name and title] will identify areas for improvement and consider appropriate student ideas.
- [Name and title of person or department] will keep good records of all cyberbullying incidents. [Include additional details of location of records, if applicable.]
- [Name and title of person or department (different from above)] will conduct an annual evaluation, including a review of the cyberbullying prevention policy, student and staff education, assemblies and programs, recorded incidents, investigations, and student, parent, and staff feedback of the aforementioned items.

#### **Promoting the positive use of technology**

[Name of school] will:

- Use training opportunities to help staff support students in safe and responsible use of technology.
- Ensure all staff and students understand the importance of password security and the need to log out of accounts.
- Educate students about keeping personal information private and the general appropriate use of the internet.