



NASHOBA
Regional School District

50 Mechanic Street Bolton, Massachusetts 01740

Nashoba Regional School District

Positive Climate Plan

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NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT POSITIVE CLIMATE PLAN

I. Leadership

The Nashoba School District Leadership Council (Superintendent, Assistant, Superintendent, Director of PPS, Director of Health and Wellness, principals, assistant principals, and deans) plays a critical role in developing and implementing the District Positive Climate Plan and engaging the community efforts to promote a positive school climate in all of our District schools. The Leadership Council supports and encourages understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. The Leadership Council is responsible for setting priorities and staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. It is also the responsibility of the Leadership Council to involve representatives from the school community, including School Councils, in developing, implementing, and communicating the Plan.

A. Public Involvement

The Nashoba Regional School District's (NRSD) Leadership Council is responsible for developing the state-mandated Bullying Prevention/Intervention Plan (this document shall be referred to as the NRSD/Positive Climate Plan). Any Plan and/or policy changes shall be posted on the NRSD district website.

B. Assessing Needs and Resources

The Nashoba Regional School District, at least once every four years beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, will review the NRSD/Positive Climate Plan. The District has implemented several surveys to assess the school climate. The Nashoba Regional School District implemented the VOCAL survey in grades 4, 5, 8, and 10.

Additionally, the District has partnered with Panorama, a survey framework tool, to administer school climate and sense of belonging surveys for students in grades 3-12. Youth Risk Behavior Surveys are also administered biannually in grades 6, 8, and 9-12.

The Nashoba Regional School District has implemented these surveys to allow for initial and periodic needs assessments to survey students on school climate and school safety issues, collecting and analyzing school-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying, with the focus of identifying vulnerable populations and "hot spots: in school buildings, grounds or buses. In addition, they began utilizing Panorama with faculty and students to assist in understanding school climate needs. Finally, the District has informed parents about our surveys and the goal.

C. Planning and Oversight

Each Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean at NRSD shall oversee the collection of Positive Climate Incident Reports on bullying (Appendix A). The Principal/Assistant Principal will investigate incidents of harassment/bullying and determine the severity of the complaint. Once harassment/bullying has occurred, according to MG L. c. 71, s370, the Principal/Assistant Principal shall formally investigate using the Administrative Positive Climate Incident reporting form (Appendix B). In addition, each Principal/Assistant Principal will review and amend student and staff handbooks annually to reflect the policies stated within the law. Ongoing professional development will be available for school personnel through the Department of Teaching and Learning.

D. Priority Statements

Nashoba Regional School District is committed to providing a safe learning and working atmosphere for students, employees, and visitors free from bullying sexual harassment, cyber-bullying, hazing, and intimidation. We expect that all school community members will treat each other with respect.

Our commitment is an integral part of our continual effort to promote learning and prevent and eliminate bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede learning.

The District recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including sex, age, disability, gender, national origin, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, 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 has developed specific steps to ensure that our schools are safe, supportive environments for vulnerable populations in the community and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

It is a violation for any employee, student, or visitor to engage in or condone bullying in school or at school-related functions or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of bullying.

The school will take remedial and/or disciplinary action when such bullying occurs in or out of school but has a nexus to school or is disruptive to an employee's or student's work or participation in school-related activities. This includes reports of harassment, verbal, physical, electronic, or in any other form.

Parents and guardians of students alleged to have engaged in bullying (verbal, physical, or electronic) will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words, or images connected to the complaint will be reviewed.

A student disciplined for bullying will not be readmitted to the regular school program until parents or guardians have come into the school to discuss the circumstances of the event(s).

It is the responsibility of every employee, parent, and student to recognize bullying acts and take every action necessary to see that necessary protocols and procedures are followed. An employee, parent, or student who believes they have been the target of bullying has the right to file a complaint and receive a prompt, confidential response in accordance with district protocol and policy. In some cases, to proceed, outside agencies may be contacted and involved so information relating to the complaint may be released.

II. Training and Professional Development

A. Staff Training on the Plan

Nashoba Regional School District provides annual ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals, to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development includes, but not be limited to:

- i. developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents;
- ii. developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- iii. information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, victim, and witnesses to the bullying;
- iv. research findings on bullying, including information about students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- v. information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and
- vi. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying

Relevant sections of the Positive Climate Plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be part of the mandatory training that is implemented in the District.

B. Ongoing Professional Development

The NRSD Department of Teaching and Learning, in conjunction with the Professional Development Committee, will assess and discuss the professional development needs of the NRSD staff as related to bullying and retaliation. Identified education and training opportunities will be made available on-site during regular calendar-approved professional development time or off-site when the building administrator approves.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will focus on the needs of students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional areas identified by the District for professional development include:

- Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
- Fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference
- Building relationships and communicating with families
- Constructively managing classroom behaviors
- Using positive behavioral intervention strategies
- Applying constructive disciplinary practices
- Teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
- Engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students

III. Access to Resources and Services

Nashoba Regional Public Schools takes specific steps to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment. These steps include, but are not limited to, the following resources and services:

A. Identifying Resources

Print, non-print (DVDs, streaming video), online, and curriculum-based resources for educators, parents, and students are detailed in the 'Positive Climate Resources' document on the NRSD district website. In addition, as new resources are identified, they will be added to this document and made available.

B. Counseling and Other Services (Guidance/School Adjustment Counselor)

The NRSD Guidance team currently has a full staff of service providers who assist our schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, as well as for the perpetrators. Social skills programs and intervention services which assist in preventing bullying in the school setting include:

- Individual and/or group counseling
- Community referrals
- Consultation/collaboration with appropriate staff
- Parent meetings/consultations
- Consultation with outside providers
- Regular meetings with teacher teams
- Functional Behavioral Analyses (FBAs) and Behavioral Implementation Plans (BIPs)
- Classroom observations
- Social pragmatic lessons within the classroom and group settings
- Facilitation of social pragmatics
- Coordination of anti-bullying interventions for students, parents, and staff members utilizing bullying prevention services such as MARC-trained trainers

C. Students with Disabilities

As required by MGL c. 71B, § 3, as amended 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 their disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to better avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

D. Bullying related to a student's sexual orientation or gender identity

Bullying incidents involving actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression will be referred to the school adjustment counselor or interventionist, who will contact the necessary people (administration, parents, DCF, community counselor, or police) as appropriate after a thorough assessment of the situation. Ongoing assessment and intervention will continue as needed to ensure the student's safety. Assessment and discussion will focus on facts regarding the student's involvement as a target or aggressor and on safety planning, not on information that reveals the actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation of the student.

E. Referral to Outside Services

Site-based access to resource guides, links to outside information services, and community resources for the NRSD community is available through our Guidance Counselors, Social Workers, Nursing staff, and Administrators.

IV. Academic and Non-Academic Activities

A. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches

Students at the K-12 level, district-wide, are educated on the importance of bullying prevention through a variety of methods:

Best Buddy Chapters: Create effective friendships between students with special needs and their typical peers. Best Buddies relationships possess many qualities known to be essential components of adolescent friendships and some additional relationship dynamics that may have significant consequences for social-psychological development.

Student Ambassadors: Students volunteer to assist in creating an environment that is positive for new students to the high school. As an ambassador, they focus on welcoming students to the school by personally guiding them around the school, meeting with students at lunch, and volunteering as tour guides for high school transition.

Rape Aggression Defense (RAD): This program is designed to help women overcome the effects of sexual harassment and sexual violence on campus by teaching **assertiveness awareness, risk reduction, risk recognition, avoidance, and physical defense strategies** since it has been well established that sexual harassment and sexual violence on campus are forms of sexual discrimination prohibited by Title IX. The classes consist of a presentation, warm-ups, stretches, and learning and practicing self-defense techniques. The final class is a controlled live simulation assault where students will put knowledge, instinct, and self-defense techniques into action.

Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP): A course, through discussion and role-playing, focuses on creating strategies to empower students to be proactive in helping promote a positive and safe school environment (high school, college, workplace, etc.). This innovative curriculum has been developed by Northeastern University and is co-taught by both a male and female wellness instructor. As a result, students gain a heightened awareness and explore safe ways to confront issues of violence, harassment, and abusive peers to make a difference in our society.

Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) The mission of NRSD's Gay and Sexuality Alliance is to promote equality and acceptance within the school environment. We encourage the development of character and kindness that students can carry with them into their lives after high school. You don't have to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual to join.

Social Skills Groups: K-12 Interventionists conduct social pragmatic training with students in small group settings. These groups focus on improved conflict resolution, tolerance, increased self-awareness, and effective communication skills.

Therapeutic Programming: Increased therapeutic support and counseling during the school day is provided to students with identified emotional disabilities.

Advisory- Each middle school offers an Advisory Program. The Advisory Program uses a thematic curriculum based on Origins Developmental Designs for grades 6-8 students. During Advisory, faculty and staff work closely with a small group of 10 – 13 students doing team-building activities to practice problem-solving and develop conflict resolution and communication skills.

Health Classes: Health classes address the topic of bullying and bullying prevention sporadically through books, discussions, and role-play. Ongoing assessment of bullying prevention across the curriculum will need to occur during Job-Alikes to explore additional opportunities to integrate positive climate approaches into the district-wide curriculum.

Responsive Classroom: Responsive Classroom (RC) pedagogy is used throughout grades K-5. This curriculum is based upon important school-wide core values and universal language addressing cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. These values are constantly being addressed in the classroom, during specials, and at school meetings. The K-5 discipline policy is currently under revision, and the goal is to have the policy coincide with responsive classroom language and consequences. Our primary goal is to train as many teachers as possible in RC practices, especially Morning Meeting, to build community, social-academic competency, and a core value focus. (See Appendix C for more information.)

Internet Safety: Nashoba Regional School District includes in its curriculum Internet Safety. The curriculum teaches students about appropriate and safe online behavior, including intellectual property, personal safety, and cyber-bullying awareness and response. To the extent practical, staff supervises and monitors appropriate usage of the online computer network and Internet access per our Internet Acceptable Use Policy (Appendix D). Investigation into the expansion of these lessons of safety awareness is ongoing within our 21st Century Skills initiative with a focus on ethical and moral usage of electronic technology.

B. General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts

Best Teaching Practices:

NRSD encourages teachers to follow *Best Teaching Practices* in all curriculum areas. Some of these practices also pertain to school climate. The following strategies are *Best Teaching Practices* that will continue to be encouraged on multiple levels to discourage bullying/harassment and promote a positive climate:

- Classroom expectations are designed so that all members of each class are respected
- The staff strives to praise and acknowledge individual differences and achievements among students (both in and out of school)
- Areas outside of the classroom where most incidents may occur, such as hallways, cafeteria, recess areas, etc., should be monitored closely for inappropriate behavior.
- Incidents should be thoroughly discussed, and students should be encouraged to report inappropriate behavior.
- Be accessible and empathetic.

Bullying can also be addressed within many areas of the curriculum. As more approaches are developed, they will be added to this Plan as appendices.

V. Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents, guardians, or others and may be oral or written. Verbal reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. NRSD staff members are required to report promptly to the Principal/Assistant Principal any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents, guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school or District will make reporting resources available to the school community, including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form (see Appendix A) and an anonymous online reporting system. The online reporting system will be developed and implemented safely and confidentially with the support of the Network Manager.

A. Reporting

The Nashoba Regional School District expects staff, 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/Assistant Principal. All staff members must report any bullying or harassment incident they see or learn about. Other reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely based on 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.

B. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Principal/Assistant Principal 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 (See Appendix E). Responses to promote safety may include, but are 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 Principal/Assistant Principal will take additional steps to promote safety during and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Principal/Assistant Principal 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 including, but not limited to the above-stated accommodations.

C. Obligations to Notify Others

Notice to parents or guardians: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Principal/Assistant Principal will notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor within twenty-four hours and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Principal/Assistant Principal contacts parents or guardians before any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

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/Assistant Principal first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Principal/Assistant Principal 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.

D. Investigation

The Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean 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/Assistant Principal/Dean may, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean will inform the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean, and other staff members as determined by the Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. The Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean will maintain a written record of the investigation. If necessary, the Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean will consult with legal counsel about the investigation after consultation with the Superintendent.

E. Determinations

The Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee will make a determination based on all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted from participating in any school activities. The Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean 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/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s) and/or school counselor and the target's or 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/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the investigation results and, if evidence of bullying or retaliation is found, what actions will be taken to prevent further bullying or retaliation. All notices 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/Assistant Principal/Dean 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 to report violations.

Taking disciplinary action: If the Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee decides that consequences are appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Principal/Assistant Principal, 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 Plan and with the District's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA).

If the Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Promoting safety for the target and others: The Principal/Assistant Principal will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to help ensure the target's safety and that of others. The Principal/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee may 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 following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Principal/Assistant Principal 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/Assistant Principal/Dean or Designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

The Principal/ Assistant Principal/ /Dean 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.

F. Disciplinary Actions

School administrators and staff may use their professional discretion in administering disciplinary consequences to students, taking into consideration the nature of the offense, the impact of the student's inappropriate behavior upon the general welfare of the school, and the student's prior history of misconduct. The following actions may be used by the administration and staff in responding to disciplinary problems.

Written notification to parent; reprimand; written apology; detention; suspension from transportation, athletic participation, social or extracurricular activities/organizations, or other privileges; community service; removal from class; involuntary transfer; environmental cleanup; directed study placement; external/in-school suspension; expulsion; notification of police; referral to counseling/School Psychologist and drug/psychological evaluation.

VI. Collaboration with Families

A. Parent Education and Resources

Principals will offer informative, educational sessions for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula, the Plan, and any social competency curricula used by the schools. The programs will be offered in collaboration with parent organizations, School Councils, and Special Education Parent Advisory Council and during Open House Events. These programs will be sponsored by and/or presented by the school administration.

- Information on the dynamics of bullying and reporting information will be made available in administrative offices, media centers, nursing offices, and guidance departments.
- Parent components of the curricula will be shared with parents through building-based newsletters.
- District and school-based websites will provide families access to a wide variety of resources for parents, students, and educators on the dynamics of bullying and online safety.
- Current bullying prevention curriculum resources utilized within the District to create a positive school climate are available in hard copy and on all school websites (See Appendix A-D).

B. Notification requirements

The Nashoba Regional School District will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula through the distribution of the Plan summary that will include information about anti-bullying curricula, the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying, and online safety. The District will provide all parents and guardians a written notice of the District's Internet Safety Policy upon enrollment or annually in student handbooks. NRSD will include the Plan summary in each school's handbook.

All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats and available in the language(s) most prevalent amongst the District's parents or guardians. The school or District will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. Prohibition against Bullying and Retaliation

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, or 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.

- 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.

As stated in MGL c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the District or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. Problem Resolution System:

Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of Chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v):

The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department’s problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. This information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats:

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking 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, or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

IX. Definitions

A. Aggressor

A person(s) who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation. The definition of Aggressors includes both students and staff members. As defined in GL c. 71, 370, as amended, a member of the school staff includes, but is not limited to, an "educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional.”

B. Bullying

As defined in MGL c. 71, § 37O, "Bullying" the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a 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 of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;
- (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
- (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyberbullying.

C. Cyberbullying

Bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes but is not limited to email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See MGL c. 71, § 37O defines "Cyber-bullying" as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall 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.

Cyber-bullying shall also include

- (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or
- (ii) 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 in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of 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 in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

D. Gateway Behaviors

Isolated, non-repeated behaviors include, but are not limited to, teasing, name-calling, making fun of, exclusion, spreading rumors, talking about, staring, making faces, mimicking, rough housing, physical altercation, and cyber issues.

E. Hostile environment

As defined in MGL 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.

F. Retaliation

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.

G. Staff

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

H. Target

A student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

X. Relationship to Other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the 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, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Positive Climate Plan prevents the 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 district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the District to take disciplinary action or other action under MGL c. 71, § 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

XI. Appendix

Appendix A: Positive Climate Incident Reporting Form

Appendix B: Administrative Positive Climate Incident Reporting Form

Appendix C: Curriculum Resources for Bullying Prevention and Creating a Positive

Appendix D: Internet Policy: Use of Networked Information Resources

Appendix E: Safety Plan

Appendix A

POSITIVE CLIMATE INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** _____ (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.)

2. **Person Filing the Report** _____ **Same as Above**

3. **Check whether you are the:** **Target of the behavior Reporter (not the target)**

4. **Check whether you are:** **Student** **Staff member** **Parent Administrator**

Other (specify) _____

5. **Your contact information/telephone number** _____

6. **If student, state your school:** _____ **Grade:** _____

7. **If staff member, state your school or work site:** _____

8. **Information about the Incident:**

a. **Name of Target (of behavior):** _____

b. **Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior):** _____

c. **Date(s) of Incident(s):** _____

d. **Time When Incident(s) Occurred:** _____

e. **Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible):** _____

9. **Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):**

Name: _____ **Student** **Staff** **Other** _____

Name: _____ **Student** **Staff** **Other** _____

Name: _____ **Student** **Staff** **Other** _____

10. **Describe the incident using details (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used).**

APPENDIX B

ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIVE CLIMATE INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** _____ (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.)

2. **Person Filing the Report:** _____ (Same as above)

3. **Check whether you are the:** **Target of the behavior** **Reporter (not the target)**

4. **Check whether you are a:** **Student** **Staff member (specify role)** _____
 Parent **Administrator** **Other (specify)** _____

5. **Your contact information/telephone number:** _____

6. **If student, state your school:** _____ **Grade:** _____

7. **If staff member, state your school or work site:** _____

8. **Information about the Incident:**
 - a. **Name of Target (of behavior):** _____
 - b. **Name of Aggressor** (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____
 - c. **Date(s) of Incident(s):** _____
 - d. **Time When Incident(s) Occurred:** _____
 - e. **Location of Incident(s)** (Be as specific as possible): _____

9. **Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):
Name: _____ **Student** _____ **Staff** _____ **Other** _____
Name: _____ **Student** _____ **Staff** _____ **Other** _____
Name: _____ **Student** _____ **Staff** _____ **Other** _____

10. **Describe the incident using details** (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).

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

11. **Signature of Person Filing this Report:** _____ **Date:** _____
(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously)

12. **Form Given to:** _____ **Position:** _____ **Date:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date Received:** _____

I. INVESTIGATION

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

2. **Interviews:**

• Interviewed aggressor	Name: _____	Date: _____
• Interviewed target	Name: _____	Date: _____
• Interviewed witnesses	Name: _____	Date: _____
	Name: _____	Date: _____

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

If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	------------------------------	-----------------------------

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	------------------------------	-----------------------------

Summary of Investigation:

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

**1. The finding of bullying or retaliation:
CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION**

Yes No

Bullying Incident documented as _____

Retaliation Discipline referral only _____

2. Contacts:

Target's parent/guardian Date: _____

Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____

District Equity Coordinator (DEC) Date: _____

Law Enforcement Date: _____

3. Action Taken:

Loss of Privileges **Detention** **STEP referral** **Suspension** **Community Service**

Education **Other** _____

4. Describe Safety Planning: _____

5. Follow-up with Target: scheduled for _____

Initial and date when completed: _____

Follow-up with aggressor: scheduled for _____ **Initial and date when completed:** _____

Report forwarded to Principal: Date _____ **Report forwarded to Superintendent: Date** _____
(If the principal was not the investigator)

Signature and Title: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix C

Curriculum Resources for Bullying Prevention and Creating a Positive School Climate

NRSD has some all-school and also some discipline-based curriculum that addresses bullying and the creation of a positive and respectful school climate. We currently use Responsive Classroom in all our K-2 schools. The second Step is implemented at various levels in our K-5 schools and our middle schools. Some other resources that are available to consider and evaluate are also listed.

Responsive Classroom

Responsive Classroom: From the Responsive Classroom Website
<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/aboutrc.html>

“The Responsive Classroom is an approach to elementary teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. The goal is to enable optimal student learning. Created by classroom teachers and backed by evidence from independent research, the Responsive Classroom approach is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. The approach therefore consists of classroom and school-wide practices for deliberately helping children build academic and social-emotional competencies.

Guiding Principles

Seven principles, informed by the work of educational theorists and the experiences of practicing classroom teachers, guide the Responsive Classroom approach:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum
- How children learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction
- To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control
- Knowing the children we teach-individually, culturally, and developmentally-is as important as knowing the content we teach
- Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children's education
- How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

Since 1981, thousands of classroom teachers and hundreds of schools and school districts have used the Responsive Classroom approach to help create learning environments where children thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. In urban, rural, and suburban settings nationwide, educators using Responsive Classroom practices report increases in student learning, motivation, and responsibility and decreases in problem behaviors.

Northeast Foundation for Children, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)3 organization in Turners Falls, Massachusetts, is the developer of the Responsive Classroom approach and offers professional development services and publications for educators.

Classroom Practices

Responsive classroom: (ten classroom practices)

- Morning Meeting - gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead
- Rule Creation - helping students create classroom rules to ensure an environment that allows all class members to meet their learning goals
- Interactive Modeling - teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique
- Positive Teacher Language - using words and tone as a tool to promote children's active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline

- Logical Consequences - responding to misbehavior in a way that allows children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity
- Guided Discovery - introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility
- Academic Choice - increasing student learning by allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work
- Classroom Organization - setting up the physical room in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, and productivity
- Working with Families - creating avenues for hearing parents' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches
- Collaborative Problem Solving - using conferencing, role-playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students

Schools implementing the Responsive Classroom approach school-wide typically adopt the following practices:

- Aligning policies and procedures with Responsive Classroom philosophy - making sure everything from the lunch routine to the discipline policy enhances the self-management skills that children are learning through the Responsive Classroom approach
- Allocating resources to support Responsive Classroom implementation - using time, money, space, and personnel to support staff in learning and using the Responsive Classroom approach
- Planning all-school activities to build a sense of community - giving all of the school's children and staff opportunities to learn about and from each other through activities such as all-school meetings, cross-age recess or lunch, buddy classrooms, and cross-age book clubs
- Welcoming families and the community as partners - involving family and community members in the children's education by maintaining two-way communication, inviting parents and others to visit and volunteer, and offering family activities
- Organizing the physical environment to set a tone of learning - making sure, for example, that school-wide rules are posted prominently, displays emphasize student work, and all school spaces are welcoming, clean, and orderly."

Outcome Data

The Second Step program is creating change in student pro-social behavior. The Kennedy Middle School used the program throughout its school year, and during follow-up, it was found that when faced with a hypothetical conflict scenario, 62 percent of students in a language arts class wrote a peaceful response to the problem. Not only are students knowledgeable about peaceful resolutions, but also there has been an effect on student behavior as a result of the curriculum.

In a randomized control study, researchers found that some students' behavior had taken a positive turn after only 17 hours of classroom exposure to the Second Step curriculum. Direct observation of student behavior in various settings (i.e., classroom, cafeteria, and playground) during different stages of the intervention (i.e., baseline, two weeks after completion, and 6 months after completion) revealed:

- Decreases in physical aggression (p.= .03)
- Increases in neutral and pro-social behavior (p.= .04).

With continued involvement by all school staff, Second Step should increase the pro-social behavior of students and lessen the likelihood of violence, thereby making schools safer environments that are more conducive to learning.

Steps to Respect: A bullying prevention program

The research-based STEPS TO RESPECT program teaches elementary students to recognize, refuse, and report bullying, be assertive, and build friendships. In fact, a recent study found that the program led to a 31 percent decline in bullying and a 70 percent cut in destructive bystander behavior.

Developmental Designs 1

The Nashoba Regional School District is pleased to announce plans to host a ***Developmental Designs 1*** workshop as a Summer Academy. The ***Developmental Designs (DD)*** approach is an integrated social-emotional learning approach similar to the elementary school-based ***Responsive Classroom®***. To meet the unique combination of social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of young adolescents, ***Developmental***

Designs offers an array of strategies to keep young people safe, connected, responsible, and engaged in learning.

Miscellaneous lessons for improving school climate

Civility Lessons

Classroom Activities : [Disagreeing Without Being Disagreeable](http://www.racebridgesforschools.com/wp/?p=648) found at Race Bridges For Schools
<http://www.racebridgesforschools.com/wp/?p=648>

Bullying Prevention Resources

Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Bullying Prevention and Intervention Resources <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/bullying/>

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/direct-from-the-field-a-guide-to-bullying-prevention>

Massachusetts Prevent Bullying Law Massachusetts Attorney General's Office

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/ago-guidance-on-hate-and-bias-incidents-in-schools-112020/download>

Bullying Prevention and Response <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/bullying>

Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) <https://www.marccenter.org/>

<https://www.schoolsafety.gov/bullying-and-cyberbullying>

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

Wired Safety <https://www.wiredsafety.com/schools-and-cyberbullying>

iKeepSafe <https://ikeepsafe.org/resources/family/>

Appendix D

INTERNET POLICY

USE OF NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES

The Nashoba Regional School District recognizes the value and importance of network information sources and related technologies for a well-rounded education. The District supports access of students and staff within appropriate bounds.

The District makes telecommunications, electronic information sources, and networked services available for the enhancement of learning and teaching within various curricula. The District expects the staff to blend thoughtful use of these educational avenues throughout the school experience and provide guidance and instruction to all students in the appropriate use of these resources.

The District realizes the positive and constructive use of these resources; it also recognizes the potential for possible misuse. Therefore, individual users must take full responsibility for their own actions. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise, for their actions. The District reserves the right to access, audit, and review usage. The use shall be governed by administrative regulations, procedures, user guidelines, and user agreements. Information stored or transmitted on NRSD computer systems is the property of NRSD and may be reviewed by the District at any time.

In order to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), this document will serve as Nashoba Regional School District's Internet Safety Policy. Nashoba Regional School District has a content filter in place that blocks and filters Internet sites that are obscene, contain pornography, or contain any material deemed to be inappropriate or harmful to minors as defined by CIPA [Pub.L.No.106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Nashoba Regional School District includes in its curriculum Internet safety. The curriculum includes teaching students about appropriate and safe online behavior, including intellectual property, personal safety, and cyberbullying awareness and response. To the extent practical, staff supervises and monitors appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy.

The District takes cyberbullying seriously, and appropriate action will be taken to protect students and staff from any form of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means and includes the distribution of electronic communications or the posting of electronic material that may be accessed by one or more persons.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students directed at another student that has the effect of:

- Causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to his or her property
- Placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property
- Creating a hostile environment at school for the bullied student
- Infringing on the rights of the other student at school
- Materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school

Ethical participation in academic interactive web resources and electronic forms of communication is expected of all students and staff. Any text, voice, or image that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all uses of interactive web resources and any electronic communications. This includes but is not limited to, profanity, racist, sexist, or other threatening or discriminatory remarks. Students should promptly inform a staff member if any messages received or material reviewed are inappropriate.

All personal or school-owned technology and electronic devices shall be monitored. All technology and electronic devices should be used primarily for academic purposes during official school hours. Use of the network, technology, and electronic devices shall be permitted only upon submission of signed agreement forms by both parents/guardians and students. Some networks may require an additional agreement by users, i.e., outlining standards for behavior and communication. User accounts shall be limited, suspended, or revoked if these resources are misused.

The following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
2. Using obscene language
3. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others
4. Unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online
5. Trespassing in others' electronic files or plagiarizing others' work as their own
6. Violating copyright laws
7. Revealing identifying information such as first and last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs, unless approved by a teacher for the purpose of meeting course requirements.
8. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors
9. Sharing a password or using others' accounts and passwords
10. Intentionally wasting limited resources (i.e., excessive printing, downloading, or online streaming)
11. Employing the network for commercial or other non-academic purpose
12. Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks

Publication of information shall be in accordance with the Nashoba Regional School District
Publication of Personal Information Policy

Ref: E-Rate Primer Central,
2009 Children's Internet
Protection Act (CIPA) MGL;
Chapter 71, Section 370

STAFF/FACULTY CONTRACT FOR USE OF THE INTERNET THROUGH SCHOOL RESOURCES

I, _____, accept and agree to abide by the following rules: (Print Name)

1. I agree to abide by all rules which are listed in the Nashoba Regional School District's guidelines for acceptable use.
2. I realize that the primary purpose of the Nashoba Regional School District Internet connection is educational and that, as such, educational purposes shall take precedence over others.
3. I realize that the use of the Internet is a privilege and not a right. I accept that inappropriate behavior may lead to penalties.
4. I agree not to participate in the transfer of inappropriate or illegal materials through the Nashoba Regional School District Internet connection.
5. I agree not to allow other individuals to use my account for Internet activities nor will I give anyone my password.
6. I realize that the Nashoba Regional School District reserves the right to examine all data stored on all District machines to ensure all users are in compliance with District regulations.

Nashoba Regional School District makes no warranties (expressed or implied) with respect to the service it is providing. Nashoba Regional School District will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Networked Information Resources is at your own risk. Nashoba Regional School District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Bargaining unit members are responsible for supervising students, and the employer shall use its best efforts to implement safety procedures, including blocks and filters, to assist teachers in this effort. A bargaining unit member shall not be disciplined except for just cause in the application of this policy.

Staff/Faculty Signature: _____ Date: __ School: _____

First Reading: May 27, 1999
Adopted: June 10, 1999
Revision: June 20, 2002
Revision: April 17, 2003
Revision: September 9, 2011

Appendix E

• Safety Plan for Target	• Safety Plan for Witness	• Conduct Plan for Aggressor Student
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Directions: After the determination that an act of bullying or retaliation has occurred and after appropriate discipline has been enforced, the Principal or Administrative Designee may develop a safety/conduct plan with the student(s). The parent/guardian is involved in the development of the Plan. Teachers/Teams are notified of the incident, parties involved, and their roles in the incident. **Please check the appropriate box.**

Name of Student: _____ Grade: _____ School: _____

Brief description of incident: _____

Check-in person: _____

Frequency and duration will not be less than two (2) times per week for a period of four (4) weeks.

Number of times Weekly: _____ Number of Weeks: _____

Duration of Plan: ___/___/___ to ___/___/___

For more than three (3) objectives/strategies, attach additional sheets. When objectives/strategies involve seeking outside counseling/assistance, provide a list of qualified agencies. As Progress Reports are completed, they should be attached to the Action Plan.

Objective/Strategy #1								
Implementer: _____								
Steps: _____								
Progress Report Dates	One:		Two:		Three:			
Teachers/Team Notified	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Copy to Parent/Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Objective Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date:
Implementer Signature:				Date:				
Student Signature:				Date:				

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____			
Objective/Strategy #2			
Implementer: _____			
Steps: _____			
Progress Reports Dates	One:	Two:	Three:
Teachers/Team Notified	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Copy to Parent/Guardian
Objective Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Date:
Implementer Signature:		Date:	
Student Signature:		Date:	
Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____			
Objective/Strategy #3			
Implementer: _____			

Steps:			
Progress Report Dates	One:	Two:	Three:
Teachers/Team Notified	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Copy to Parent/Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Objective Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date:	
Implementer Signature:	Date:		
Student Signature:	Date:		
Parent Signature:	Date:		

Meeting/Contact with Parents (date): _____

Meeting/Contact with Parents (date): _____

Meeting/Contact with Parents (date): _____

Follow up: _____

Follow up: _____

Follow up: _____