



Argosy Collegiate Charter School

2025

**Bullying
Prevention &
Intervention Plan**

June 2025

Table of Contents

I.	MISSION AND LEADERSHIP.....	3
II.	TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	6
III.	ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES.....	7
IV.	ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES.....	9
V.	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION.....	11
VI.	COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES.....	17
VII.	PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION.....	18
VIII.	PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM.....	19
IX.	DEFINITIONS.....	19
X.	RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS.....	20

APPENDIX A: [Link to digital BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM](#)

MISSION

The mission of Argosy Collegiate Charter School is to prepare our scholars with the academic foundation and the character skills necessary for success in college, career, and life.

Argosy Collegiate Charter School is committed to providing a safe, positive, and productive educational environment for all scholars. Argosy Collegiate Charter School is dedicated to providing obstacle-free access within our school system to enhance our sense of belonging and respect for all members of the Argosy Collegiate community, to establish a learning environment that affirms our unique differences and fosters respect for all viewpoints and inclusivity for all groups, including those that have been historically marginalized.

The Plan was revised and updated during the 2024-2025 school year. The Plan is consistent with state and federal law, and includes the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71 §37O and information about the policies and procedures that the District will follow to prevent and respond to bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation incidents.

Argosy Collegiate Charter School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention plan applies to students and school staff members, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals.

LEADERSHIP

A. Public Involvement in the Plan:

The Plan will be revised in collaboration with teachers, school staff, community representatives, and scholars following the completion of the 2026 Climate Survey. The plan will be presented to the Board of Trustees during the June 2026 Board Meeting, which is an open forum. There will be a feedback link shared with the community following the meeting, which will remain open for 2 weeks.

B. Assessing Needs and Resources:

The Plan is the District's blueprint for enhancing the capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying. As part of the revision process, school leaders sought input from families, staff, and community members to assess the adequacy of current programs, review policies and procedures, review existing data on bullying and behavioral incidents, and assess available resources, including curricula, training, and educational programs. The following steps allow for periodic needs assessments:

- Surveying students, staff, and families on school climate and school safety issues
 - Surveys related to the Plan will commence in Spring 2026 (last Climate Survey issued in June of 2023)
- Analyzing District and building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying will be done by:
 - District Administrative Team
 - Student Support Teams
 - Board of Trustees

At least every four years, the District administers a student survey developed by the Department that assesses school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in schools. Additionally, the school or district reports bullying incident data annually to the Department.

C. Planning and Oversight:

Leaders responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

Argosy Collegiate’s Administrative Teams are Responsible For:
<p>District Level and Building Specific Administrative Teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning for ongoing professional development ● Developing/revising curriculum ● Developing new/revised policies and procedures including an internet safety policy ● Leading parent/family engagement efforts and parent information materials ● Receiving reports on bullying ● Collecting and analyzing building data to assess the current climate and to measure improved outcomes ● Recording/tracking incident reports and accessing information ● Planning supports that respond to the needs of alleged targets and alleged aggressor ● Implementing policy/procedures ● Amending staff/scholar handbooks to make clear that bullying of scholars by school staff or other scholars will not be tolerated. ● Implementing parent/family engagement efforts and parent information materials ● Reviewing and updating the plan biennially

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan, except when a reported bullying incident involves the Principal or the Assistant Principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Executive Director or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Executive Director is the alleged aggressor, the Board of Trustees or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

D. Priority Statement

The mission of Argosy Collegiate Charter School is to prepare our scholars with the academic foundation and the character skills necessary for success in college, career, and life.

Argosy Collegiate Charter School is committed to providing a safe, positive, and productive educational environment free from bullying and cyber-bullying.

At Argosy Collegiate, we are dedicated to creating an inclusive and supportive school environment where every member of our community feels valued and respected. We strive to eliminate barriers to participation and learning by promoting a culture that celebrates individual differences, encourages diverse perspectives, and uplifts historically marginalized groups. Through active student involvement and empowerment, we aim to build a school climate rooted in belonging, equity, and mutual respect.

We understand that some students may face a higher risk, and are more susceptible for being a target of bullying, harassment, or teasing due to real or perceived attributes such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic background, housing status, academic standing, gender identity or expression, physical traits, sensory differences, disabilities, or associations with individuals possessing these characteristics. Our school is committed to identifying proactive measures to cultivate a safe and welcoming environment for all students, especially those in vulnerable groups. We aim to equip every student with the knowledge, tools, and confidence necessary to recognize, prevent, and address incidents of bullying and harassment.

Our school community maintains a zero-tolerance stance toward any unkind or disruptive conduct, including bullying, cyberbullying, and acts of retaliation, whether they occur on campus, during school events, or in any school-affiliated setting. All formal reports of possible bullying will be thoroughly investigated and addressed in a timely manner to ensure the well-being and safety of those affected. All staff are trained to identify possible trends of behaviors that may develop into bullying, and to report any possible cases. This commitment is embedded in every aspect of our school culture, through classroom instruction, staff training, extracurricular programs, and active engagement with parents and guardians.

A. Annual staff training on the Plan

Dates	Training	Location
September	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff duties under the Plan, overview of the steps the Principal/designee follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, overview of bullying prevention curricula provided 2. The intersection between bullying and scholar’s Civil Rights (a look at our susceptible populations, and what the 504 and IEP Teams do to counteract this susceptibility) 	Staff Meetings
August (or when onboarding if hired after the start of the school year)	Mandated Staff Training	Asynchronous Mandated Training

B. Ongoing Professional Development : Professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- Implementing Second Step Curriculum and the Developmental Designs Approach, both of which instruct on the following:
 - Developmentally appropriate strategies to promote classroom culture, kindness and skills necessary to prevent and respond to possible bullying
 - Developmentally 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 alleged aggressor, alleged target, and witness 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 cyberbullying and internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying

C. Written Notice to Staff : Argosy Collegiate Charter School staff will have annual written notice of the Plan included in School Handbooks, the Code of Conduct, and Employee Handbooks, including sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by school staff.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Promoting positive school climates and ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed are the responsibilities of the entire Argosy Collegiate community. Teachers, instructional assistants, administrators, specialists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and all other staff members are held accountable for vigilance in identifying potential and actual bullying situations. Each individual influences the school environment through positive role modeling, instruction, and support. This section of the intervention and prevention plan identifies specific resources and services available to provide counseling, support, and referral to community agencies for students and families of students that may be bullying targets or student aggressors.

The District's process for identifying its capacity to provide counseling and other services (including Restorative Justice) for targets, and aggressors, and their families consisted of a school-by-school inventory of professional staff and programming that support the foundation of positive school environments by focusing on early intervention and intensive services. Listed below are the specific existing positions that provide counseling, support, and develop safety and support plans for students that have been targets of bullying or have been found to be an aggressor of bullying.

Counseling: Argosy Collegiate Charter School has a total of 6 full time School Counselors, providing a counselor to student ratio of approximately 1:105, which is a far lower ratio than the national average. The District has been intentional about keeping our number of counselors stable. The district increased the total amount of counselors during the COVID-19 pandemic, as mental health emergencies and crisis situations were on the rise at the return to in-person learning. Following this, the District has remained committed to the need for the higher number of School Counselors in order to continue to support our scholars' mental health, social and emotional well being and support scholars in developing and maintaining the skills necessary to prevent and respond to bullying behaviors.

Safety Planning: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Safety Plans are created by each school's Administrative Teams (including: Principal, Director of Student Services, Dean of Students and Assistant Principal). The primary purpose of these plans is to ensure the safety of all scholars while the investigation is ongoing, and prevent any chance for recurrence of the reported behaviors during the investigation period. Following the investigations, plans may be updated, changed or removed, depending on the outcomes and follow up supports.

The district offers a variety of social skills and educational programs as tools to prevent bullying. These include general curricula, co-curricular, theme activities, small group and individual social skills training, behavior intervention plans, direct interview, instruction from the Restorative Justice Coordinator and school-wide presentations.

When the District determines that a student has a disability that affects social skill development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of a disability, the Special Education Team considers what should be included in the IEP to develop the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing. Some of the commonly included elements include:

- Social skills instruction (individual, small group, classroom)
- Goals and objectives for self-advocacy, self-esteem, and/or appropriate peer relations
- Social thinking strategies
- Functional behavior assessments and positive behavior plans
- Student monitoring and environmental controls
- Enhanced communication between the Team, parents, administration and other involved agencies

The established protocol for referring students and families to outside services is consistent throughout the District. When a student or family is identified as needing outside services, a referral is made to the school psychologist, adjustment counselor, or student assistance counselor. These professionals have working relationships with outside agencies to facilitate the referral process for students and families. The counselor contacts the family and/or other persons knowledgeable of the situation and determines the appropriate agency. They provide the contact information to the parent and instructions regarding the process. If requested by the parents and with proper authorization for the release of information, the counselor will also contact the agency. A list of community-based resources is available upon request from school administrators and counselors.

ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The District provides age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention and intervention in each grade. Instructional approaches include classroom presentations, whole-school initiatives, and focused bullying prevention/intervention strategies and social skills development. Timely and pertinent professional development supports bullying prevention efforts at each school and throughout the District.

The following approaches are communicated in establishing a safe school and classroom environment for all students and underscore the importance of bullying prevention and intervention initiatives:

- **Clear Expectations:** DREAM Values guide expected behaviors for all scholars. Our focus remains on establishing and reinforcing clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines including use of LiveSchool which provides for an in depth tracking system for behaviors that may (or may not) be related to bullying, such as “Disrespect to Peer”, which would warrant follow up in processing the incident.
- Use of LiveSchool which is a merit and demerit tracking system for positive and negative behaviors. Scholars earn points, which are turned into dollars, which are able to be spent on weeks that a scholar earns Collegiate Day, at the Navigation Station, as well as on school event tickets (ex. Dances, dress down days, etc.)
- **Weekly Collegiate Reports:** ACCS sends a weekly Collegiate Report home with middle school scholars and emails a report to high school scholars. This report provides a means of communicating scholars’ social and behavioral standing over a given school week. The Collegiate Report shows scholars’ weekly points earned through the LiveSchool merits and demerit system. Scholars earn DREAM points that can be used as dollars in the school store. Scholars who earn more merits than demerits in a given week may also participate in Collegiate Day and wear college-themed garments. The Deans of Students are available to review scholars’ Collegiate Reports to provide more information about a scholar’s areas of strength and areas for improvement in terms of meeting school expectations. Scholars who are subject to school discipline may lose Collegiate Day privileges, including access to the school store.
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including especially for students who have or are perceived to identify with one or more of the following protected classes or characteristics : race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation gender identity, mental, physical, development or sensory disability, students with disabilities, homeless, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline, through our Restorative Justice initiative
- Utilizing positive behavioral supports
- Encouraging and providing access to training for adults to develop positive relationships with

scholars

- Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors (anti-bullying curriculums, social skills groups, developmental designs approach, Circles of Power and Respect-CPR)
- Internet safety
- Supporting student interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

A. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches

There are four common programming approaches in which bullying behavior is addressed.

These standard approaches are:

- (1) curriculum connections
- (2) climate development
- (3) co-curricular activities
- (4) policies and consequences

The District's bullying prevention and intervention curricula (Second Step, Powersource) are informed by current research, which use a variety of the following instructional approaches:

- 1) Using scripts and role plays to develop skills
- 2) Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students or school staff engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance
- 3) Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance
- 4) Emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies
- 5) Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications
- 6) Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference
- 7) Recognizing that certain students are more susceptible to bullying and as such making specific proactive plans for individual students to ensure bullying does not occur

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

Students, parents, or others may make oral or written reports of bullying or retaliation. Reports made by students, parents, or others who are not District staff members may be made anonymously. Anonymous reporting can be conducted online on the District website, www.argosycollegiate.org. On the website follow the below sequence to locate the reporting forms:

1. Click **Argosy Families** at the top
2. Select **School Policies** from the drop down
3. Click **Bullying Prevention and Reporting**
4. Select either “File a Report” or “Bullying Prevention Intervention Plan” to review this plan or file a report.

Staff Reports: A District staff member is required to file an online bullying report form if they suspect bullying is taking place. If a District staff member is unsure if their observations should be investigated as bullying, they must at minimum immediately report the concerns to the school Principal or designee, or in the case of the Principal or other administrator being the cause for the concern, the staff member must report the concern to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the alleged aggressor, the reporter may go to the Board of Trustees to file a report of bullying.

Building specific disciplinary protocols will be followed per respective codes of conduct, at the confirmation of a report of misconduct, regardless of the status of a pending bullying investigation. In other words, scholar misconduct is addressed in real time, and a consequence for individual behavioral incidents that breach the code of conduct, will have discipline applied independent of the bullying investigation. This is to ensure that timely and appropriate consequences and follow up is received by the scholar in order to support teaching the behaviors we want to see, and correcting those that are not appropriate or acceptable.

At the beginning of each school year, the 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 Executive Director or designee when the Principal or the Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor, will be incorporated in

student and staff handbooks, on the school and District website and in information about the Plan.

Expectations

Staff Reports: A District staff member is required to file an online bullying report form if the suspect bullying is taking place. If a District staff member is unsure if their observations should be investigated as bullying, they must at minimum immediately report the concerns to the school Principal or designee, or in the case of the Principal or other administrator being the cause for the concern, the staff member must report the concern to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the alleged target, the reporter may go to the Board of Trustees to file a report of bullying.

The requirement to report to the Principal or designee does not limit the staff member's authority to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

Students, Parents, and Other Reports: The District expects students, parents, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of potential bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it utilizing one of the following reporting methods:

- Online Form: File A Report, www.argosycollegiate.org
- Orally or in writing, report to the Principal or designee or the Executive Director or designee when the Principal or the Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the Board of Trustees or designee when the Executive Director is the alleged aggressor.
 - Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the Principal or designee or to the Executive Director or designee when the Principal or assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor or to the board or designee when the Executive Director is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.

Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely based on an anonymous report. Students, parents, 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.

B. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

Allegations of Bullying by a Student or Staff

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.

Upon receipt of a report of bullying of a scholar, by another scholar, and when an investigation is opened, the Principal or designee will alert the teachers and staff members who work with the alleged aggressor and alleged target, to ensure timely awareness of the investigation.

The safety of all involved including the alleged target and/or alleged aggressor will be considered for Safety Plans or protective measures any time a report of potential bullying is made, if appropriate.

- **Bullying Prevention Safety Plans are developed by school administration and include the following at the onset of the report: (note: this list is not all encompassing but representative of the core components of a Bullying Prevention Safety Plan that is developed at the onset of an investigation)**
 - No Contact Policies (including indirect communication, social media communication, phone calls, texting, etc.)
 - Specific arrival and dismissal protocols for each scholar
 - Bathroom protocols for each scholar to avoid unsupervised interactions during the investigation period
 - Digital encounter preventions through SmartPass technology
 - Lunch protocols for each scholar
 - Retaliation and consequences for breaking the Bullying Prevention Safety Plan

As necessary, the Principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during and after the investigation. The Principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting the alleged target from bullying or retaliation to 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.

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 Plan 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.

- A. Investigation. The Principal or designee will investigate promptly 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 necessary, the Principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation. (Align this with school or district procedures.)

- B. Determinations. Within a reasonable timeframe, 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.

Building specific disciplinary protocols will be followed per respective codes of conduct, at the confirmation of a report of misconduct, regardless of the status of a pending bullying investigation. In other words, scholar misconduct is addressed in real time, and a consequence for individual behavioral incidents that breach the code of conduct, will have discipline applied independent of the bullying investigation. This is to ensure that timely and appropriate consequences and follow up is received by the scholar in order to support teaching the behaviors we want to see, and correcting those that are not appropriate or acceptable.

The determination of substantiated bullying is used to inform next steps in the disciplinary and educational processes, including:

- Reviewing if consequences were issued for the infractions that substantiated bullying
- Guiding educational decision making, including restorative justice supports, for the aggressor and/or the target, including research projects, presentations, issuance of an apology, and/or mediation
- Planning and reflecting on how to avoid engaging in bullying behaviors in the future
- The need to enhance any safety plans currently in place
- The need for further disciplinary measures, including detention and/or suspension

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 pro-social 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 Plan 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 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.

COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Argosy Collegiate Charter School recognizes the need to engage and collaborate with families to increase capacity to prevent and respond to bullying. Essential aspects of effective collaboration are family education/resources and home/school communication:

Family Education and Resources:

Annually in the Fall Open House, Argosy Collegiate's Student Services table, chaired by the Director of Student Services, provides information on the District's Bullying Policies, reporting, and general awareness of our zero tolerance policy for bullying.

During school year, the District schools will offer education sessions for parents/guardians that are focused on the parental components of bullying prevention and social curriculum used at each level. The programs will be offered in collaboration with parent groups such as PTOs, SEPAC, ELPAC, Open House, Family Teacher Conferences.

Developmentally, students learn the skills to navigate social situations and often face challenges. Conflict is a normal part of relationship building and development. Through navigating these conflicts, students may exhibit rude and mean behavior. If the behavior is not resolved after mediation, skill building, and intervention, is one-sided and demonstrates a power imbalance, then it may fall into the category of bullying. Parents/guardians can help at home by modeling and supporting healthy and positive conflict resolution strategies, and avoid labeling all behaviors (such as rudeness and peer conflict) as bullying.

Notification Requirements - Home/School Communication: Each year the school/district will inform parents/guardians about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. The notice will include information about bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school/district will send parents/guardians written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents/guardians will be in electronic formats and in hard copy. Notices and information will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. Argosy Collegiate Charter School will post the Plan and related information on the District's website.

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- I. On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school, and
- II. 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 of 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 M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM

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 can be provided to the parent or guardian of a scholar by the main office.

DEFINITIONS

Aggressor

A student or 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 who engages in bullying or retaliation.

Bullying

As defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is 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 target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target 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 cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying

Is 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 a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

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 person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.

Staff

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

Target

Is a student or staff member against whom bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school and 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 at 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 Plan 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 the Plan 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 37H1/2, M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 41 and 42 other applicable laws, or local school or district policies or collective bargaining agents in response to violent, harmful or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

APPENDIX

[Direct Link to Website's Bullying Report Form](#)

