

Arlington Catholic High School
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
December 2010

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Arlington Catholic High School has developed a prevention and intervention plan to address bullying with the support, advice and direct involvement from administrators, teachers, parents, religious leaders, advisory board, and students. The basis of this plan is to address the issue of bullying by reinforcing and building upon the academic and religious philosophy of Arlington Catholic High School:

Arlington Catholic Philosophy

To create and develop an awareness of Christian values.

To foster an individual and communal relationship with God.

To encourage a spirit of service and leadership within the school, local, and global communities.

To provide an academic atmosphere which will enable students to recognize and desire excellence.

To challenge students to think critically and creatively.

To encourage the growth of independent learning.

To promote respect for self and others.

To help students develop and preserve physical and mental health.

To offer opportunities for students to experience belonging, caring, and relating to others.

In order to implement a successful bullying intervention and prevention plan ACHS is committed to build upon its mission, philosophy and social and academic expectations from its students and school community. This plan will include and review the following issues:

LEADERSHIP

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO BULLYING

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND
RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

REACHOUT TO FAMILIES AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY

STATEMENT OF PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND
RETALIATION

DEFINITIONS

OTHER RELATED LAWS

Appendix A: Incident Reporting Form

LEADERSHIP:

The ACHS administration under the leadership of the Principal has convened a bullying prevention and intervention committee whose task is to develop a comprehensive anti bullying plan that will meet the needs of the ACHS school community. The members of this committee include the Principal, Vice Principal, Dean of Students, Director of Admissions, Director of Guidance, Director of Athletics, Faculty Representatives, Student Representatives and Parent Representatives. (committee of 12) This committee will prepare an anti bullying prevention and intervention plan to the faculty as a whole for their approval and in addition will provide an opportunity for parents of students of Arlington Catholic to review the plan and provide their input.

As part of the planning process the committee will review and discuss the current policies as it pertains to prevention and response to issues of bullying. The committee will develop procedures for reporting and documenting incidents. The committee will provide clear definitions that are consistent with Massachusetts General Laws. The committee will establish a process in which this plan will be reviewed annually.

The principal or his designee (Dean Of Students) will be responsible for receiving reports on bullying, be responsible for documenting such reports and responsible for the implementation and enumeration of the plan.

POLICY STATEMENT

Arlington Catholic High School is committed to promote respect for self and others by providing a safe learning environment that is free from bullying, cyber bullying and harassment or any retaliation thereof. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive plan to provide a culture where all forms of bullying or disruptive behavior will not be allowed to disrupt the social and/or academic learning process.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Annual Staff training:

All staff will receive a power point via their email which reviews the main components of the recent bullying legislation.

All staff will receive an in service training of the components of the Arlington Catholic Anti Bullying Plan. .

All teachers will attend a workshop conducted by Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) that will focus on bullying prevention, intervention, warning signs, strategies and ways to support the targets and the aggressors. This workshop will also focus on the process of reporting bullying as well as review the curricula offered by MARC.

In addition to a curricula for all students to be delivered for ninth and tenth grade students in Physical Education classes and curricula delivered to eleventh and twelfth grade students in their Theology classes all students will attend an assembly conducted by representatives of MARC in January of 2011.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Arlington Catholic High School employs four full time Guidance counselors and a full time School Adjustment counselor. Guidance counselors take an active role in the development of the academic and social life of each student at Arlington Catholic. Counselors along with administration will intervene in any and all allegations of bullying.

- Guidance counselors and the School Adjustment Counselors provide assistance and support to identified targets, witnesses and aggressors. Individual counseling and group counseling are provided.
- Classroom teachers and counselors provide discussions on bullying, respect for others; and provide discussions to promote and reinforce a positive school climate and environment that is healthy and safe consistent with the school's philosophy and its commitment to Christian values.
- MARC provides an annual fall workshop for parents on the issue of bullying and cyber-bullying
- MARC provides assemblies on the subject of bullying to all students

- Teachers receive a workshop on a power point presentation on bullying prepared by the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology.
- School Nurse also provides resources and support for students, staff and parents promoting a climate that is healthy and safe.
- The Principal or his designee(s) will provide safety plans for students who have been the targets of bullying or retaliation.
- Theology classes and Physical Education classes provide anti bullying curriculum to all students at Arlington Catholic High School
- Arlington Catholic High School High School has a long standing relationship with many outside agencies that provide additional resources for students, parents and staff.

ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITES

As part of their enrolled courses, all students at Arlington Catholic must take Theology as a major subject for each of the four years in attendance. The curriculum of each course is tailored to the respective grade a student is enrolled, Freshman Theology, Sophomore Theology, Junior theology and Senior Theology. Major components of each course include morality, social justice, decision making, respect for others and the development of students' spiritual, physical and academic growth. Bullying is a topic that is discussed, imbedded and reviewed in each Theology course. In the spring the junior and senior theology teachers will deliver a unit on the topic of Bullying that is evidence based and developed by MARC.

All freshman and sophomores are enrolled in Physical Education classes and the Physical Education teacher will also deliver a similar unit on bullying that is evidence based developed by MARC.

These activities within the curricula should emphasize bullying prevention and intervention approaches utilizing a variety of strategies. MARC will provide the resources for an anti-bullying, intervention curriculum for our Physical Education and Theology teachers to deliver.

The following skills and approaches for students will be utilized:

- Using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber bullying. with emphasis on the imbalance of power the aggressor has over the target;

- Emphasizing cyber safety both in and out of school, and the appropriate use of social networking sites;
- Supporting and educating students for respect of one another by emphasizing and practicing the school's values and mission;

The following teaching approaches and skills will be utilized:

- Creating safe school and classroom environments that promote respect for others and a culture that will not tolerate incidents of disrespect, by setting clear student expectations, across all classrooms, in regards to behavior;
- Reporting and responding to derogatory comments and all alleged incidences of bullying
- Educating students about the Bullying Law, emphasizing the importance of reporting incidents and communicating to students the ways in which reports can be made
- Supporting students to develop and practice positive approaches to problem solving such as conflict resolution strategies and peer mediation programs;
- Providing students with Internet and media safety information emphasizing appropriate use of various social networking sites such as facebook, texting, and cell phone/smart phone usage

All students at Arlington Catholic will attend a Bullying Workshop conducted by MARC at the end of January of 2011. This workshop will be an annual event. In addition our staff will attend an annual workshop conducted by MARC.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Reporting bullying or retaliation

- All school staff members are required to immediately report to the principal or designee any instances of bullying or retaliation about which the staff member becomes aware or witnesses.
- Staff, students, parents or guardians, and others may report bullying or retaliation orally or by voicemail and/or in writing or by email. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be given to the principal or designee and will be recorded.
- Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school staff members may be made anonymously orally or in writing and will also be recorded.
- The Incident Report Form is posted on the website for parents, staff, and students.

- Use of the Incident Report Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school will:
 - 1) include a copy of the Incident Report Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
 - 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee and
 - 3) post it on the school's website.
- At the beginning of each school year, the school will provide the entire school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies and procedures 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, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school website, and be available to parents or guardians, all staff, and all students.
- Reporting by staff
 A staff member will report promptly to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation.
- Reporting by students, parents/ guardians
 The school expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee.

Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

Safety

- Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation as necessary.
- The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies to protect from bullying or retaliation any student who has reported bullying or retaliation, witnessed bullying or retaliation, provided information during an investigation, or who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Obligations to Notify Others

- ***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 aggressor of this and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents/guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- ***Notice to another school.***
If the reported incident involves students from more than one nonpublic school, charter school, 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.

- ***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 aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will consult with other individuals the principal or designee deem appropriate, consistent with the plan and with applicable school policies and procedures.

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 will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
- The principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, in consultation with the school counselor and school administration as appropriate, may conduct interviews. 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. All acts of bullying that have been investigated and confirmed will be recorded.
- Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

Determinations

- The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after an 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 limited from benefiting from school activities.

The principal or designee will:

- 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
 - 2) determine what corrective actions and/or disciplinary actions are necessary. Disciplinary measures will be left to the administrator's discretion, within the guidelines of the school handbook and age appropriateness.
- 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 aggressor's parents or guardians to identify any underlying issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional support.
 - 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.

Confidentiality

- 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. It is imperative that the confidentiality of the parties involved (complainant and witnesses) will be maintained to the extent practicable given the school's obligation to investigate and address the matter.

Responses to Bullying

- If bullying or retaliation is substantiated, Arlington Catholic (principal, designee, teachers, counselors, and relevant staff) will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or limited in benefiting from school activities. As with the

investigation, the response will be individually tailored to all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the individuals involved. The principal or his designee will follow up and monitor both the aggressor and target.

- The principal or his designee shall contact the school counselors, social worker, to determine what appropriate intervention(s) and strategies should be put in place for both the target and aggressor.
- In addition to disciplinary action, the following are examples of steps that Arlington Catholic staff may take to prevent any recurrence:
 1. Holding parent conferences
 2. Transferring the aggressor's classroom
 3. Limiting or denying the aggressor's access to a part of the school
 4. Increasing adult supervision during after school hours
 5. Excluding the aggressor from participation in school sponsored or school related functions, after school activities or extracurricular activities.
 6. Providing relevant educational activities for individuals or groups of students such as group counseling, peer mediation, relevant workshops
 7. Providing resources for outside counseling
 8. Ongoing support and consultation for students involved such as check-ins with counselors, teachers, nurse, Dean of Students, or other administrators

Taking Disciplinary Action

- Arlington Catholic High School absolutely prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation as defined. Students who engage in bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, however, disciplinary action taken must balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior based on the facts and evidence gathered in the investigation. The range of disciplinary action based on the handbook includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:
 1. Verbal warnings
 2. Written warnings
 3. Reprimands
 4. Detentions
 5. Suspension short-term and long-term
 6. Exclusion/expulsion as determined by the principal

- 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 as well.

- Nothing in this plan is intended to prevent school administration from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying or cyber-bullying, as defined in this plan, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.

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.
- The principal or designee may choose 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 these immediately.

COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Arlington Catholic High School is committed to ensure that all parents understand both intervention and prevention activities that their children will experience as students at Arlington Catholic. Arlington Catholic is also committed to work with parents and understands how important developing a partnership with parents to educate their children in anti-bullying strategies. Arlington Catholic is committed to:

1. Publish and distribute the Bullying Prevention Plan to all parents via the Arlington Catholic Website and request all families sign off and validate they have read and discussed it with their student(s).
2. Publish bullying reporting, response, and investigation procedures in student handbooks as well as the Incident Reporting Form
3. Continue the annual parent workshop on bullying presented by MARC.
4. Publish and distribute the key elements of the Bullying Prevention Curriculum to all parents.
5. Provide parents access to the staff power point presentation on

Bullying Intervention

6. Provide access to the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center website (MARC) to provide resources to parents.

www.bridgew.edu/marc/bully

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyber bullying, 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 the school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the 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 the 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 M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the school to staff any nonschool personnel

DEFINITIONS

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, s.370, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to the target's property;
- (ii) Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- (iii) Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- (iv) Infringes on the rights of the target at school or;
- (v) Materially or substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying may include conduct such as physical intimidation or assault, including intimidating an individual into taking action against his/her will; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; stalking; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

Cyber-bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c 71, s. 370 is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not 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 message or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying also includes:

- (i) The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- (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 above in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying; and
- (iii) 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.

Cyber-bullying may include conduct such as sending derogatory, harassing or threatening email messages, instant messages, or text messages; creating websites that ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate others; or posting on websites or disseminating embarrassing or inappropriate pictures or images of others.

Hostile Environment, as defined M.G.L. c. 71, s. 370, 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 any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

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

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Relationship to non-discrimination laws

- Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school, Arlington Catholic High School does not discriminate against any student obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents Arlington Catholic from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law or school policies.

Relationship to existing disciplinary regulations

- In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, s. 37H or 37H1/2, other applicable laws, or school policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

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Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form

I. INCIDENT REPORT

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)

Check whether you are the: Target of the behavior Reporter ~ not the target

Check whether you are a: Student Staff member (specify role) _____

Parent Administrator Other (specify): _____

Your contact information/telephone number: _____

If student, state your school: _____ Grade: _____

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

Information about the Incident:

Name of Target (of behavior): _____

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

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible) _____

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

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

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

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

Signature of Person Filing this Report: _____ Date: _____

(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

Form Given to: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date Received: _____

Arlington Catholic High School

II. INVESTIGATION

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

2. Interviews

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

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

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

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION Yes No

Summary of Investigation:

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

III. CONCLUSION FROM THE INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation;

YES NO

- Bullying Incident documented as: _____
- Retaliation Discipline referral only: _____

2. Contacts:

- Target's parent/guardian Date: _____ Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____
- District's 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:

_____ Fo

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 principal was not the investigator)

Signature and Title: _____ Date: _____